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Editorial correspondence should be addressed to John W. Langdale, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL, D.D., Ph.D., LL.D. Professor of Christian Doctrine, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill.

DAVID E. ROBERTS, Ph.D. (Edinburgh). Dean of Students and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, New York, N. Y.

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Have We a Doctrine of Salvation for Our Day?

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

IT WAS my privilege in student days to hear Henry van Dyke give his Lyman Beecher lectures on *The Gospel for an Age of Doubt*. The theme today might well be *The Gospel for an Age of Despair*. Men today are not so much searching for a reasoned faith as they are looking for a means of help. Within there is division, frustration, uncertainty, defeat; without, the threat to everything that man holds dear as he looks on a hostile world and faces a seemingly hopeless future. Under pressure of these needs, the age of doubt has given way to an age of credulity, for desperate men will listen to any promise of help. Think of the cults, old and new, to which men are thronging: spiritualism, theosophy, astrology, "The Great I Am," Father Divine, healing cults, millennialistic movements, and all the rest. And think of the social saviors in whom men put their trust, the men of the sword in Russia, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Japan, not to mention the prophets of social utopia in our own land whose strength seems to be in proportion to their extravagance of promise.

Strangely enough, it is at this time of deepest need that the Church has most neglected the preaching of salvation. We have discussed belief and emphasized organization, we have called for service and promoted drives, we have given attention to education and have laid stress on worship, or at least on liturgy; but religion as salvation has no such place with us as with our fathers. The church groups which give this idea first place are those at which many of us look askance: the sacramentarian churches, the millennialistic movements, and the pentecostal-healing cults. The first seem to us magical in their theory of salvation; the second seem to offer a counsel of despair for the present and for the future a dependence on autocracy and force which is not made more valid, ethically or spiritually, because the force and autocracy are lodged with God; the third strongly appeal to the underprivileged groups, especially in rural life, but the stress on feeling does not insure moral results, and in the face of social needs there is simply an escapist otherworldliness and a compensatory emotionalism. But the

criticism of others does not in any degree change the fact of our own dereliction.

There are various reasons for this situation. There is the humanistic-naturalistic temper of an age which has been so dominated by the world of things and men that it has lost the sense of the reality of the living God. There is the reaction from the old dualistic supernaturalism which has led to an "activism," an overemphasis on the human-ethical factor. And there is the fact that the old forms in which the doctrine of salvation were presented are no longer convincing to the mind or adequate to our needs, and that the pulpit of our day does not possess a clear and convincing doctrine of salvation. This last aspect is not least important and it furnishes our theme.

This is no place for a criticism of the older doctrine. The history of Christian thought is a record of constant self-criticism. Primitive Catholicism criticized the earlier apocalypticism and the "enthusiasm" which threatened order and authority in the Church. The reformers attacked the elaborate church-priest-sacrament system of salvation which Catholicism had developed. Mysticism, which so often took lightly the significance of the historical, the ethical, and the social (the Church), made its very real contribution but met opposition as well. Calvinism, to the Wesleyans, seemed to be a limitation of the gospel and a misconception of God's method with man. And the evangelical doctrine for many became inadequate because of its individualism, its otherworldliness, its too great preoccupation with the one problem of forgiveness, and the way it linked this to untenable theories of the atonement.

Let us first understand clearly that there is no supernaturally given theology. Christianity is a historical and spiritual fact, a movement of God in history and an experience of God in life. The interpretation of this fact and its formulation as a teaching is the task of the Church in every age. The foundation is always the same: the supreme reality of the world of the spirit; the fact that man belongs to this world, that he may have fellowship with it and in that fellowship find saving help; the revelation of what that world is and of how man may have this help through Jesus Christ. This is eternal and the eternal does not change. But we have to speak of the Eternal in the accents of time. The New Testament itself, like every

later age, speaks in the thought forms of its day. We see that clearly with Paul, the first great interpreter. Terms like justification, redemption, adoption, and propitiation were taken by him from Jewish religious thought and the Roman social background. With them went simpler terms based on human relations, terms such as Jesus used when He spoke of Father and son, repentance and faith and forgiveness. Some of these categories and many later ones have lost their force for our day. That is true particularly of the magical, the mechanical, the impersonal-mystical, and the legalistic. The categories of the personal and ethical, the vital and social, coming from prophetic religion and supported by our widening experience, now make the strongest appeal. Using these latter categories, let us note some of the lines thus indicated along which we may expect a doctrine for our day to move.

1. Salvation is life. It cannot be less than this and there is nothing higher. Men want deliverance from evil, but that by itself is not salvation. Men look for an eternal abode, safe from change and decay and death; but salvation is more than a place. It is not a divine afterthought, to remedy an unforeseen disaster or avoid an impending fate. It is the goal of all creation. It is life, life in every part and sphere, life at its richest and highest.

2. Life is a matter of relations. It is never something in and by itself. It belongs to each part, but only as that part is richly and rightly related to the whole. To be saved is to be whole within, and to be at one with the world whole to which we belong. It is to be whole by belonging to a whole. To have life is to be richly and fully alive to that world whole. ("You did he make alive," says Paul): alive to beauty and truth and love and goodness, alive to men about us, to all that they are and mean, alive to God in vision, in the response of faith and loyalty, in devotion to the great ends that God is working out. At every level, physical, mental, moral, aesthetic, social, religious, life is present only as there is this harmonious response and active interrelation with our world.

3. Man's supreme relation is with God. God and men and the world and our own inner self, these are the four relations that make up life and give it meaning. But God is not just one more relation coming after the rest. All other relations have their being and meaning in Him. Until man touches God he is not yet man, and only as his life is rightly related to God can he live rightly with himself, his neighbor, and his world. To know God is to live, as Tolstoi said. Only in God can man know his fellow

man and live with him, as our day gives tragic witness. Only in God can we know this physical universe, making it minister and not master of our life. Only through Him can we be one within. The fault of traditional doctrines of salvation has not been the overstress on the soul's relation to God but the failure to see what that relation really meant.

And just as the relation with God is needed for all the other relations of life, so the other relations are needed if we are to live rightly with God. "The world" is not an alien land; it is the place of God's presence and of His creative toil. The soul needs at intervals to seek God in solitude, but the soul will lose God if it remains in solitude. We need to see the meaning of the larger sacraments: nature in her beauty and sublimity, but above all that which joins us with men in sympathy and service, in common tasks and high fellowship, which, so far as it means love and fruitful toil, means the presence of God Himself who is creative love. Life, life itself in every meaningful and enriching aspect, is at once the saving gift of God and the sphere of saving fellowship with God. Especially do we Protestants, with our tendency to individualistic religion, need to realize the corporate nature of the religious life, to know that the richest fellowship with God is to be found in the human fellowship where He dwells. That does not mean the institutional-sacramentarian conception, but it does mean a larger place for the Church.

4. The relation of man to God in religion is personal-ethical, and it is through this relation into which God receives man by His grace that the transforming power of God comes into our life. Salvation does not mean a metaphysical magic by which an entering divine substance transforms a finite and evil nature or substance, whether by sacramental operation or in some sudden emotional experience. Nor is there any force of divine omnipotence called irresistible grace, working out willy-nilly a predetermined end. The power of salvation is the power of holiness and love, of grace and truth, meeting us in that divine Spirit whom we call our Father, calling forth from us the answer of penitence and trust, of reverence and awe, of humility and love.

5. The work of God in salvation is the establishing of right relations. It has been a frequent mistake in the past to view salvation as something negative, and as something different and separate from God's work of creation. The negative task is here, indeed; evil of every kind is to be overcome, and sin which destroys man's relation to God and perverts and de-

stroys all relations among men. But salvation itself is a positive, a creative process, and sin itself is overcome by the positive act of establishing man's right relation with God. It is this that is unique in the Christian conception: God does not wait for men to become sons before He receives them as sons; He receives them into the relation of sons in order that they may become sons. And in this spiritual creativity which we call salvation, God's method is not different from that of His creative work as elsewhere seen. In nature God does not create things out of hand by the fiat of sheer power; He brings things into relation so that they may reach a higher level of life by becoming part of new and more significant wholes. Our scientist-philosophers have described the process by various names. Wilhelm Wundt called it creative synthesis; Jan Smuts has described it as whole-making, or the "holistic" process; Whitehead and others speak of the process of integration. Flaming suns and sidereal systems, and on our planet the ascending levels of atom, molecule, crystal, living cell, complex organism, and the varied structures of human society, all reveal this method.

With man it becomes vastly more complex and significant. In him we have all the other relations, physical, chemical, and biological, and in addition a whole new world of rational, social, moral, and spiritual possibilities. Here creation enters on a new stage, its highest and last level. A new factor appears, a being who can see and understand and choose. By that same token he is a being that can refuse. He can decide to be a fragment and not a part of a glorious whole. He can refuse the divine destiny. In so refusing, however, he brings in division, discord, and destruction. For this final stage of God's creative work we use the term salvation, a word which is first of all negative because it has evil to overcome, but which is positive and creative in its method as well as in its end.

The four main relations that make up life indicate the four fields within which the problems arise for a doctrine of salvation.

I. Our fathers rightly saw that the relation to God was the beginning and end of the doctrine of salvation, the highest good in man's life and the condition of all other goods. Their theology concerned itself largely with the doctrine of the atonement as an answer to the question as to how a holy God could forgive sinful man. Many other pressing needs appear today, and particularly in connection with questions as to the reality and availability

of God. Can we believe in a living and personal God with whom we can have fellowship? What are the paths to God that man can take, the ways by which he can enter into living communion with this God, by which life and strength and help can flow from God into his life? Can we who hold to human freedom and responsibility for action believe at the same time in this idea of a saving life and power that comes from God? And how is this possible?

2. The second field with which our doctrine of salvation must deal is that within man himself. For the soul of man is a microcosm; it contains its own world of relations. Man is not one being but many beings in one. Unity is the goal of life, not its beginning. There are many possible selves, each striving for mastery, and there is further disunion that is caused by failure of right relation with one's fellows and one's world. So there comes a brood of troubles destroying man's inner life: in relation to others there is loneliness, sensitiveness, fear, bitterness, jealousy; in relation to one's life work frustration, defeatism, hopelessness, impotence, despair: and within are division, strife, and disintegration. The "new psychology" has helped us greatly in understanding these ills and in probing their sources. Our doctrine of salvation must utilize this aid, alike for diagnosis and treatment. For we are concerned as truly as the psychiatrist with these fears and failures, with social maladjustment and the havoc that it works within, with personalities dividing and disintegrating, and with the need of inner wholeness. But psychiatry cannot take the place of religion as a way of salvation. Religion sees not only sickness but sin, a basic inner attitude and decision that is wrong. It lifts this problem of man out of the subjective and individual and sees it in the light of man's relation to a cosmic order and purpose. To use Hocking's terms, only a revolution that comes through a radical insight can save men. The setting in which man must see himself and find his help must include something more than human nature and human relations; it must find another center than the individual and his interest. Only as man sees this larger world and his place within it, only as he finds in that world a Being whose power and purpose and goodness invite his trust and command his loyalty, can man's fragmentary life be made whole, his division of soul healed, and his spirit enter into strength and peace. The task for Christian thought remains, however, to bring together psychological fact with religious insight and faith, to show how God thus makes whole by confronting man with the final reality and meaning of his

world and bringing him to the decision which determines all other decision.

3. The third field for our doctrine of salvation is that of the world of things, the visible universe, the world of wealth and work, of industry and commerce, the new world of machines. It has been considered commonly by Christian thinkers from the standpoint of ethics; it belongs equally to the doctrine of salvation. It is not simply a problem as to how man shall master this world instead of letting it seduce him with its promises and enslave him with its fears. It is a crucial problem in our social order but it is more; it is a religious problem. Here too our doctrine of salvation must work out a philosophy and a way. The philosophy must show the positive and creative role which the physical plays in God's plan of individual and social salvation, and it will involve far more than Protestant counsels of thrift or medieval asceticism. The way must furnish a spiritual dynamic that will enable men to translate the Christian insight into effective living.

4. So far we have been considering man the individual; but the idea of man as purely individual and apart is an abstraction, just as truly as is the idea of a society apart from constituent persons. Empirical man as we know him always appears as part of a larger whole, and that whole is both social and historical. The doctrine of salvation will be fragmentary and unrealistic unless it deals with the problems suggested by these two facts. The first problem is commonly indicated by the words social salvation. The phrase is unsatisfactory but the idea is clear. Human life is always social life, group life, something corporate. If humanity is to be saved, this life must be saved, for this is humanity. Home, friendship, the community, industry, the State, these are not something merely institutional and external. These are the relations which make up human life, and man can only be saved in and with these relations. With the social fact goes the historical, for only in a historic process can a society come into being, and the Bible reveals a God working in history toward such a goal.

A little reflection will show how many of the urgent questions which concern the Church today lie in this field of the social-historical. That has become evident in the discussions connected with the notable ecumenical gatherings of these last years, especially the Oxford Conference. We can at most suggest the problems with which we must deal here, but it is obvious that the piecemeal discussion of these last years should issue in a doctrine which would give a unitary view in relation to problems which are at bottom

one. Meanwhile the Church, if it is not to lose out in the midst of totalitarian strife, must give an answer to man's search for salvation which will be more than individual and otherworldly.

The first group of questions we may call social. Has Christianity anything to say concerning the associated life of man, as to industry, the State, international relations, war and peace? Does the social order, like the order of nature, belong in God's plan and is it a field of His work? What of the relation of Church and State, of Church and industry? Is the State a rival and enemy of the kingdom of God, or a divinely ordained instrument, or a matter of pure indifference from the standpoint of a spiritual religion? And if there be a righteous will of God which industry and the State should heed, is there also a saving help of God in this social realm? Is there, in any strict sense, social salvation, or is it merely at best a matter of social reforms with which sinful man is attempting an impossible task? A new understanding and appreciation of the Church is one of the most pressing needs at this point. This applies to Protestantism, whose doctrine of the Church has often tended to be individualistic and humanistic. But Catholicism, with its tendency to identify Church and kingdom of God, and its conception of the Church as a legally established institution in control of a sacramentarian system of salvation, is not the alternative that we need. We must realize that there is an organic, a solidaristic quality to religion as to all man's life, that the individual finds his God and lives his life in a fellowship that is at once human and divine. At the same time we must see how different is this Christian conception of a corporate life from that totalitarianism which represses personality and so in the end destroys the very social unity which it aims to secure. In its principle of love and devotion, Christianity points out God's way by which individual personality, sacred in God's sight, finds itself in the fellowship as it gives itself to the common life. This problem of individual and social in our doctrine of salvation comes next in importance to the problem of divine and human, and at no point does the current social scene call upon religion more desperately for help.

As soon as we get away from an individualistic concept of salvation, the problem of a philosophy of history is forced upon us, for the social and the historical belong together. A redeemed society can come only in an historical movement. Extreme apocalypticism denies meaning to history, and any action of God in history except that of judgment. The saved are

simply to wait till history is over and time ended by the final deed of God's judgment and mercy. It is not a simple task to understand salvation as a movement of God in history. How can the Eternal enter into time? How can there be real human decision in history, human responsibility and action, and yet divine action carrying out its purpose? What is the goal of God in history? What are the means by which He works? Schiller declared that the history of the world was the judgment of the world. Is it God's judgment? And is there in history a redemptive creativity of God as well as judgment? Where, then, is God at work in this evil day? And what shall we say to the problem of evil? I believe that the new doctrine of salvation that will emerge from wrestling with such questions will bring a deeper understanding of the God that is revealed in Christ, of the method of this God, of the kind of power by which alone the world can be saved, of the cost of such redemptive action to God and to man. The Cross will be central in such a philosophy of history as elsewhere in the doctrine of salvation.

I began by suggesting that in Christianity salvation meant two things: on the one hand a divine deed and a living experience of God's presence and help, on the other an effort to interpret and explain in order that we might effectively bring this gospel to men. In other words, life and doctrine. It is the latter side with which we have dealt; let us, in closing, return to the other. We do not live by doctrine, necessary as it is. We live by the conviction that the eternal God has spoken to us in Jesus Christ, that we know Him as a God of mercy and saving power, that His will alone can be our peace, that His help alone can save humanity, and that as we have trusted Him He has actually and savingly come into our lives. Christianity has a gospel of salvation for this day: a way of peace and liberating courage for every tortured and fear-burdened soul, a word of authority for the nations who will go on destroying each other until they find a common obedience to One who is above the nations, a way of life in mutual reverence and love and in common effort toward a high and common good, a word of mercy for all who will show mercy, and a way of help for all who will trust this God. But this, of course, is doctrine as well as gospel. The two are distinguishable but not separable. What I am really suggesting then is that we shall study this gospel more profoundly, work out its meanings more clearly, and so relate it more effectively to the mind and life of our day.

A Christian View of Freedom

DAVID E. ROBERTS

THIS essay is intended primarily for readers who may have little or no interest in technical theological discussions about free will, but who are continually concerned about the relationship between their belief in Christ and their own moral needs and aspirations. Although Christian apologetics may always have to deal with some form of naturalistic determinism, our attention will be confined to the struggle between Christian faith and contemporary views which claim too much for man rather than too little. The struggle begins at that point where Christianity affirms belief in a divine sovereignty and grace which overarch human action; for such belief goes directly counter to the prevailing mood of human self-sufficiency which has typified our culture. Swinburne expressed the mood when he cried out: "Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things." One of the founders of our nation expressed it when he protested against opening a legislative gathering with prayer, saying: "We have no need of alien influences." That was an early instance of American isolationism, directed in this case against entangling alliances with the Deity. Many contemporary writers express the same attitude when they claim that our religion is antisocial, because just when we need to marshal all our hopes and energies in order to meet the dangers which threaten civilization, Christianity cuts the nerve of constructive effort by telling men that they are incorrigibly sinful and must look to God to get them out of their difficulties.

Even though the prophets of doom and preachers of justification by faith have not been ethically quiescent, as the charges against them would require, the humanistic protest seems plausible enough at first glance. Through his own skill and intelligence man has achieved a remarkable measure of control over nature, has produced all the practical benefits of a scientific culture, and has developed a technique of untold potency for conserving and expanding exact knowledge. Between world wars men could look upon the world which science had created, in fact and in promise, and see that it was very good; and they could eloquently proclaim that divine

aid was superfluous. The resulting creed was invigorating; it placed man strictly upon his own resources and taught him self-reliance. It marched forward in the belief that if only we can discover socially constructive solutions for our problems, there will then be little difficulty in getting us to put those solutions into effect.

To speak of that epoch is to speak of another world. A renaissance of pessimistic Protestant theology was dismissed as a passing phase, in the conviction that the unpleasant continental events out of which it sprang would prove to be likewise a passing phase. The need for God was looked upon as like the need for adrenalin—inversely proportional to the strength of the beating heart.

Looking backward we can see how faith in purely secular devices had lulled us to sleep. Such faith runs afoul of the fact that knowledge heightens all our potentialities, for evil as well as for good. The main peril of our civilization derives from the abuse of much of the knowledge which we possess. Hence the real core of the problem lies, just where it always has lain, in the sphere of the motives and character of the men who employ their knowledge and power. But humanism has not come to grips with the fact that the chief foe of social well-being is man's abuse of his own spiritual capacities. It has held fast to the conviction that in order to achieve the good, the only prerequisites are that men shall see it and possess the technical means for bringing it about. Within the year, books have appeared which still persist in attributing the coercion and violence of contemporary political forces largely to an obdurate hang-over from prescientific institutions and customs.

Christianity furnishes a much more rigorous analysis of human nature. It takes an uncompromising attitude toward our shortcomings, not out of contempt for human capacities, but precisely because it takes the highest possible view as to what man ought to be. From the first its word of judgment has come, not from a set of abstract principles, but from the life of an historical Person. It measures the extent of man's failure in terms of how far short we fall of the self-sacrificial love of Christ. And for our present purpose the important point is that the primary cause of such failure is seen to lie right at the center of man's will, in the selfish abuse of his freedom.

This can never be rightly understood so long as sin is regarded merely as a collection of momentary misdeeds. Most secular moralists admit that

man may indulge in specific antisocial actions, but assert that at the core of his character he seeks an inclusive good. From a Christian perspective one sees, on the contrary, that although man can undeniably perform specific good deeds, at the core of his character he is in rebellion against the ground and source of all good. This does not mean merely that men are apt to be conceited and self-centered in a narrow sense; it means that even the highest reaches of our artistic, ethical and religious endeavors manifest a structure built around the self at the center and God at the periphery.

The habit of thinking of sin mainly in terms of specific naughty deeds usually results in a regrettable blindness to the social implications of the gospel. But the main objection to an atomistic view is based on theological rather than social considerations. Protestantism possesses ample materials for doing justice to the fact that the ills which surround us are collective in origin, and we should avail ourselves of its resources. Surely it is an anomaly if in this brutal decade we have become so squeamish about phrases like "original sin" that we are blind to the truth behind them. Wherever we look, we see that the iniquities of the past are visited upon succeeding generations; the plight of the American Negro and the present catastrophe in Europe are trite, and irrefutable, examples. The point is that we do not perpetuate such evils just because we pick up unfortunate behavior patterns by imitation; nor are our efforts to overcome them circumscribed merely by reason of the fact that we are the victims of a tainted heritage. The forces which originate them are deeply rooted in the race. The pattern which perpetuates war, and oppression, and greed, is human sinfulness writ large; and that sinfulness dwells in each one of us.

Of course a great many people find it hard to see how the wisdom of God is manifest in granting the gift of freedom, when we mortals get into so much difficulty through the abuse of it. We can go some distance toward an answer by remembering that the same capacity which makes disaster possible, also makes discipline and moral achievement possible. The ethical life is a case of sink or swim; and unless it were possible for all of us to sink, none of us would ever learn to swim. It is as though God Himself could not bring about His purpose of creating responsible human beings without running the risks which attend delegated responsibility.

People who like their systems tidy retort that this limits God; but the retort, like the word "omnipotence" itself, is notoriously ambiguous. If we conceive of God's activity in terms of personal influence instead of in terms

of impersonal force, we can understand the sense in which it takes more "power" to discipline and redeem men who have minds and wills of their own, than to move the starry heavens in their courses.

Because we believe in the sovereignty of God, we see our freedom as set within the framework of a morally ordered world. This means that although man can abuse his freedom, he cannot do so without confronting the spiritual consequences. As Emil Brunner has put it, our civilization is like a drunken driver who comes to a curve in the road and sees a brick wall in front of him. He says to himself: "I'm not going to turn aside for any old brick wall." Well, he is at liberty to drive straight into it; but he cannot do so without a smashup.

In other words, one side of God's control of history is seen in the fact that there are limits beyond which evil cannot go without self-destruction. The sculptor Rodin once said that if anything completely ugly should ever appear, it would fall down dead. So too, as any civilization reaches the ultimate depths of evil, we can see it start to fall to pieces. Let us not deceive ourselves; there are basic principles of right and justice which human society flouts at its own peril; unless it fulfills them it destroys itself, and it deserves to fall. This may be barren comfort just now; for what is destroyed is the freedom of the human spirit itself; men can still exist, some may even thrive, organically, but at the cost of a spiritual suicide which is the more terrible because they are heedless of the worth of what has perished. Nevertheless, we need to learn that the providence of God can be seen in the forces which demolish a corrupt social order. We need to recognize that if anything else were the case, the world would not be morally ordered at all. Because the conception of God as a stern judge has been associated with a harsh and comfortless sort of religion, it has largely dropped out of sight for many of us. Indeed, we have tended to fall into the opposite extreme of regarding God as so kindly and indulgent that He turns a blind eye to our shortcomings.

Christians possess the resources for a boldness which rises above an alternating complacency and despair amid the tides in the affairs of men. Theirs is not the serenity which contemplates history *sub specie aeternitatis*; instead it is a confidence in the divine moral demands by which contemporary events, and every society, are judged. It is a confidence which is grounded in the worship of a God whose love and righteousness overreach human success and failure.

By this time most of our false beliefs in man's natural goodness and enlightenment have been shattered; but that does not mean that they have been supplanted by Christian courage. We have come to see that a consistent naturalism does not issue in an ardent humanitarian creed at all. Because it regards the environment out of which man has emerged and on which he is dependent as mindless and indifferent to value, it may well issue in blank disillusionment. At best, it leaves us in an ethical relativism which undermines effective action. When the structure of ideals begins to totter, if indeed it be merely man-made, we then recall, in bitterness or resignation, that our decisions are but the transitory preferences of a curious animal on a minor planet. On the basis of such a creed one can remain detached rather than enraged, benign rather than vicious. But one cannot set out to redeem an old world or build a new one, as humanism once promised. Indeed, the more sensitive one is to human misery, the less he can tolerate existence, whether through detachment or through compassion. Naturalism, if it find the worship of man-made ideals intolerable, is consistent; for unless God is, then we are indeed merely clever animals now bent on slaughtering each other.

Over against this impotence and disillusionment stands the Christian message that in our moral decisions there are cosmic issues at stake; and unless we can put our trust in the God of righteousness and love, we may be very sure that lesser deities will occupy the spiritual vacuum. Our culture, for all its worship of humanity, has failed to supply anything beyond ourselves which can capture our loyalty and endow our lives with an ultimate significance in the scheme of things. A religion which is based merely upon man's quest for his own highest social values simply intensifies the failure. Unless we can direct our devotion to the transcendent God who has disclosed Himself in Jesus Christ, then our religion is not different in principle from those which make gods out of their nation, their race or their class.

At this point, however, we come upon our greatest difficulty. We say that the Christian conception of responsibility must be placed over against the vagaries of naturalism, humanism and paganism. But what is the Christian conception? Historically, at least, it has included everything from Pelagianism to high Calvinism. Often it has been necessary to defend the reality of moral freedom against theological doctrines which seemed to make human decision irrelevant to salvation. Indeed, it is always a mistake to belittle the extent to which a Pelagian or moralistic interpretation is put

forward in protest against what amounts to an evasion of responsibility. It tells us that we can do what we ought. Thus it provides an important safeguard against appealing to our constitutional sinfulness as an excuse for not being able to carry out our duties. After taking all the limiting conditions into account, this interpretation tells us that there still remains a feasible goal which is sufficient to quicken our aspirations and shame our indolence.

One of the defects of contemporary continental theology is that in criticizing such a point of view it often annihilates a straw man. Contrary to what Karl Barth would have us believe, we must recognize that moralism does not deny the need for dependence upon God. Instead, it contends that the inspiration of our highest ideals *is* our communion with God. We are dependent upon Him, not only for our creation, but also for the discovery of our proper spiritual destiny, and for the maturing of our powers through that discovery.

Nor does moralism deny the reality of sin. It sees man, not as made perfect to begin with, but as made for striving toward perfection. His normal condition is one of gradual progress, and for this he needs nothing but his freedom. Indeed, a divine act which made man perfect, irrespective of his own efforts and insight, would not really be a blessing; for it would mean that God works through manipulation rather than through personal influence.

Thus moralism can be so stated that it avoids the error of thinking that God grants men the gift of freedom and then simply leaves the rest up to them. It can see God as constantly active in history, because His gracious influence is present wherever men seek to fulfil His purposes. But even when viewed in its strongest form, this position is utterly inadequate. It overlooks a distinction which needs to be drawn between two kinds of freedom. The first is moral freedom—the power of the self to determine its own action in the light of ideal ends; and we should unhesitatingly affirm this over against any Calvinistic or sacramental doctrines of grace which seem to deny it. But there is another and a higher kind of freedom, which we may call “filial freedom”; it is release from self-centeredness into a God-centered life of forthgoing love. In Christ we see this divine love as that by which and for which we are created; it constitutes at once the freely willed service of sons of God, and absolute dependence upon Him.

The defect of moralism is not that it affirms the first kind of freedom,

but that it fails to deal adequately with the problem raised by the second. Because we are the source of our voluntary actions, we are responsible for the good and evil which we do. But just because the origin of moral and spiritual failure is thus to be found right at the center of our personalities, there are definite limits to our ability to overcome such failure through our own efforts. The source of the malady which we seek to cure is in the directive center from which all seeking and all effort spring. As Archbishop Temple has written: "Man is free, for the origin of his actions is himself; yet he is bound hand and foot, for from himself there is no escape." (*Nature, Man and God*. p. 241.)

Therefore we must face the question as to what happens to free men when they try to live on the basis of their own resources. And the only possible answer is that they are torn between selfish desires and their own sense of obligation. If we may venture to put words from the seventh chapter of Romans into the jargon of modern psychology, we can express it by saying that when a man starts out to be a free moral agent, and nothing but that, he ends by becoming a "split personality" in whom rational intentions are continually being overwhelmed by his own sinfulness. As we try to perfect ourselves by forging a chain of virtuous deeds, link by link, we are soon caught in the fetters of our own endeavors. The whole project is spoiled by being man-centered. It focuses the individual's trust in his own powers, and thereby intensifies anxieties concerning his own righteousness. There is a paradox here, with which we are nevertheless perfectly familiar. The man who is confident that he can make himself righteous inevitably becomes either a self-satisfied prig or a hypocrite.

Protestantism is in a sickly condition in so far as it stops with moral freedom, because such freedom is "the bitterest form of bondage." (*Op. cit.*, p. 241.) All of us have read books in which the author has conscientiously shown how man has gradually achieved moral status in the process of evolution; and then he has gone on to argue that this testifies to the presence of a divine agency behind the process. He has shown how it is through conscience that man has been called into fellowship with God. And then the argument has trailed off. Man's moral capacities indicate a fundamental spiritual kinship and harmony with God; and that is the end of the matter.

But surely that is not the end of the matter. Moralism has always told us that we must hold up some ideal which is feasible; but when we try

to follow its counsel what meets us is not the *imago Dei*, but an image of our own imperfection, and that image stands condemned by the figure of Christ. We realize, in other words, that conscience testifies not to a fundamentally sound and harmonious relationship between ourselves and God, but rather to a fundamental conflict between our own wilfulness and His perfect love. And if we are left to merely moral freedom, then indeed sin is *inevitable*. It is inevitable not because of any external compulsion, but precisely because we are the source of our own actions and cannot rise above the consequent limits.

Incidentally what we see here is a curious reversal of positions in an old argument. Pelagius protested that any theology which calls sin inevitable is blasphemous, because it implies that God's creative work is defective. But in what has just been said the fullest stress has been placed upon the fact that precisely because we are self-determined and responsible, *we* cause the abuse of our freedom. The inevitability of sin springs from what men make of themselves, not from a necessity of creation.

On the other hand, it is really the modern Pelagian who unwittingly makes sin inevitable. He always tends to explain our shortcomings in terms of factors outside our control. He does this by claiming that our higher selves are only gradually winning ascendancy over the lower impulses which are part of our animal inheritance. Thus sin comes to be regarded as merely an inevitable by-product of the slow upward course of evolution. Such a theory is objectionable for many reasons, but mainly because it abstracts from the towering fact that responsibility has to do with the here and now, instead of with some future beatitude of the evolutionary process in view of which all our sins may be understood and their seriousness nullified.

Hence for the Christian, moral independence should always point beyond itself to fulfillment in religious dependence. Effortful striving should point beyond itself to surrender to God. From the outset, Christianity has preached the gospel of a love which both fulfills and abrogates the law. The Christian Church is founded upon the realization that in Christ we see the embodiment of what it means for human life to be in perfect conformity to the will of God. One of the chief things wrong with the familiar arguments which try to present an apologetic for Christianity on the ground that its ethical principles commend themselves to the conscience of the race, is that they assume that apart from the influence of

Christ this conscience is sensitive, pure, and in good working order. But of course the very phrase, "conscience of the race," is an extremely vague abstraction which includes everybody from Saint Francis to Doctor Goebbels. In Christ alone can we see both the depths of our own failure and the full wonder of God's pardon. What He means to mankind will commend itself only to a heart which has been shamed and quickened by Him. He alone can bring about within us that transformation whereby we adequately apprehend His significance.

Perhaps the greatest single defect of modernism is that it has adapted its Christology to fit a fundamentally secular view of human nature. Instead of acknowledging Him as the Mediator in whom God does for mankind what we cannot do for ourselves, it makes Christ the symbol of what we may become through historical development. If this is all we have to offer, then our religion is one of despair rather than of hope. For in the end this is merely a new kind of legalism. It underlies the weakness of that modern preaching which simply exhorts man to do his best, and when it has done that, has shot its bolt. It is rightly subject to the criticism that it holds up before men an impossible ideal, and then wonders why they do not follow.

Fortunately we need not seek far for a corrective; each one of us can recapture that sense of the newness of the gospel which has overwhelmed men in every age. It is Christ Himself who provides that "solution" which moralistic religion never succeeds in reaching. The Incarnation is that new thing which God has given to mankind over and above our own capacities.

Here you and I are, as men have always been, seeking with diseased wills to cure our own sickness, seeking to fulfill by obligation what can issue only from spontaneous love. But instead of leaving us in this situation, God has broken through the barrier of our own self-centeredness by identifying Himself with our lot. He has taken upon Himself the burden of our own failure, through the perfect obedience of a life of vicarious suffering. For all the complexity of arguments about the Atonement, the point at issue is in the end extremely simple. The only question is whether God's offer of forgiveness and fellowship through Christ is contingent upon the redirection of our lives, or whether it is the ground and source of this redirection. When the question confronts us in this way we can see that unless Christ is something more than a natural out-flowering of the human spirit, unless He discloses the nature of God as one whose love can save

us from our universal human bondage, then He simply holds before our eyes a vision of what we ought to be but never are. The gospel is able to rescue men from self-centered concern only because it affirms that God comes to us right in the midst of our sin and frustration. It affirms that His fellowship is something which He takes the initiative in establishing, instead of something which we must first deserve. "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5. 8).

Finally, although undeniably the Christian doctrine of salvation has often been couched in language which violates our sense of freedom, this ought not be the case. The meaning of the Incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ cannot be rightly apprehended apart from the fact that the imperfect freedom which we do possess gives rise to definite conditions which must be fulfilled if any change is to be wrought in human nature. It is only by an appeal addressed to our imperfect freedom that we can ever receive the promise of that perfect freedom which Christ restores. It is only because all men, rebellious and unbelieving and sinful though we are, stand in a responsible relationship to God even now, that we can hear the claim addressed to us and accept through faith what He has done for us. In other words, it is only because men are not totally depraved that conscience can ever make them aware of both their obligations and their shortcomings; and it is only through the discipline and despair of conscience that men are made ready for trust in Christ.

After all, if we were mere puppets, pulled by strings in the hands of God, there would be no reason why He should not simply compel us to do His bidding. Because we are not puppets, no effective change can be brought about except by something which gains our assent. A man can be coerced; but that does not get at the springs of his character. And in the work of Christ God does not override man's will; on the contrary, by disclosing His own nature through patient and suffering love, God seeks to evoke from man a response which constitutes a change of heart.

It is at this point, if anywhere, that we get light upon the meaning of suffering. We can understand, perhaps, why evil brings destruction down upon its own head; but we are still left in dismay by the fact that amid the tragedies of our age, and of every age, the relatively innocent must suffer with the guilty. Our dismay is not removed, but taken up to another level, when we recall that Christianity began with the suffering of an inno-

cent man. It offers no neat speculative theodicy which seeks to weave all ignorance and sin and sorrow into some pattern where the misery of the part is seen to be very beautiful when we perceive its place in the perfect whole. And one objection to the doctrine of double predestination is that, from opposite motives, it arrives at a theodicy with similar conclusions. No, the Christian answer to evil is not to be found in glib explanations or rigid dogmas, but in the active attitude with which it enables us to meet and to endure the struggle. This attitude is itself an expression of a trust which goes beyond saying that suffering is merely punishment for sin. For trust in Christ means that in so far as reconciled men embody at all the unqualified love which God has for the race, then the price is suffering for the sake of others. Moreover, it means that such suffering is not merely a grandiose and futile gesture; for it has aligned itself with that strange power which rules through meekness and humility, even though all history flings against it the pride of tyrants, and armies, and empires. Let us make no mistake; the clearest examples of Christian freedom which you and I have ever witnessed are men and women who in the midst of tragedy and disaster have continued to serve the cause of human brotherhood and to place their lives in the keeping of the God of love. They have found in that tragedy and disaster, not the bludgeonings of a meaningless fate, but communion with the sufferings of Christ.

Nature as the Vehicle of Grace

GEORGIA HARKNESS

I

THAT nature is in some sense instrumental to grace has been implicit in the main stream of both Catholic and Protestant thought. If God did not take the initiative, there would be no grace. But if God works through nature and if man through nature lays hold upon grace, there is no radical cleavage between the two realms. In evangelical terms the issue is, "What must I do to be saved?" The correlate in religious education is how nurture (that is, growth through a right use of nature) may contribute effectively to the Christian life.

The difficulties latent in the problem have been obscured by ambiguity in the term *nature*. Traditional Christian thought has taken the natural to mean sometimes the opposite of the spiritual, sometimes the opposite of the supernatural—and usually both. For philosophy, science and common sense, nature has generally meant physical nature—that which exists but is not mind or spirit. For theology it has not only meant physical nature, but this world in contrast with an ultimate and eternal world. As a result the spiritual and the supernatural have been unconsciously identified. This telescoping of terms was made possible by the fact that God was conceived as a supernatural Spirit and man, made in the divine image, as a spiritual entity higher than nature.

As long as nature is regarded as other than but nevertheless instrumental to spirit and to supernature, the problem of nature as the vehicle of grace is the question of *how* nature (in either sense) can serve the interests of the higher spiritual life. The question of *whether* it can do so need not be raised. However, two approaches now widely current have shifted the basis of procedure, and by doing so have denied that nature is the vehicle of grace.

One of these is the identification of man with nature in a naturalistic monism by which nature is made to mean all there is, man being subsumed within it. This is the route followed by Dewey, Whitehead, Sellars, Boodin, and most of the contemporary naturalists. Such a view is not necessarily antagonistic to spiritual values, and as is evident in the religious

naturalism of Wieman, it makes large place for more-than-human cosmic processes which may be both contemplated and worshiped as God. But it has no place for the supernatural, and therefore, since grace is conceived as a supernatural intervention in natural processes, no place for grace.

Religious naturalism gets rid of the problem of the relation of nature to supernature by emphasizing the inseparability of nature and spirit. If man is wholly a part of nature he ought to be a better part of it, but he need have no aspiration to be anything more. The exponents of this view (who quite significantly are philosophers, educators, and social scientists rather than theologians) tend graciously to anathematize the theologians for talking about grace. For them the road ahead lies through more knowledge (particularly more scientific knowledge), a more thorough-going application of the knowledge we have, a more sensitive imagination, a more consistent and determined attempt to make the right adjustment to social forces. It is an enterprise on which all men of good will can agree, and to the extent to which both agreement and action are achieved, community is enlarged and its values enriched. Such a spiritualized naturalism which is more or less religious, ranging from atheism through humanism to a profound religious mysticism, is the substructure of political and social liberalism in America. To its acceptance John Dewey has contributed more than any other individual, and he epitomizes its social significance.

The second approach by which nature ceases to be the vehicle of grace is that of the new orthodoxy. It cannot turn the tables by getting rid of nature as easily as religious naturalism does of grace, for the world is too much with us—both in its fleshly and mundane aspects. Yet the very fact of its hold upon us is the signal for a shift in the point of reference. We cannot save ourselves by a right use of nature. Our fallen state forbids. Though made in the *imago dei*, man's spiritual nature is no avenue to grace, for we bear this image no longer. We are saved only by the grace of a transcendent God through the mediatorial agency of Christ.

Though man is held to be impotent to lay hold upon the grace of God through nature, nature would still be the vehicle of grace if God, taking the initiative, were to make His created world an instrument of man's redemption. If I understand correctly the fundamental difference between Barth and Brunner at this point, it is that Barth will allow no place for general grace, any more than for general revelation, while Brunner affirms that there is *sustaining* but not *saving* grace within the state of nature. If

this "sustaining grace" is really grace, then in Brunner's thought nature is its vehicle and creation is an instrument in redemption. Yet he seems to regard sustaining grace only as the regulation of society in the general direction of order and decency, and in no sense as a force efficacious for redemption. If this is all, it is difficult to see why the same result could not be achieved on naturalistic presuppositions, or why it should be called *grace*. John Baillie justly criticizes Brunner's position when he writes, "We gain nothing by admitting the operation of the grace of God in the wider sphere if we then go on to deny that this grace is in any least degree a saving grace. We gain nothing by admitting a continuity between nature and grace if in the next moment we deny all continuity between the grace that saves and the grace that only sustains . . . for, as Doctor Barth says, there is nothing gracious about a grace that sustains with no intent to save."¹

Thus it turns out that from whichever extreme of contemporary theology we start, nature ceases to be the vehicle of grace. Religious naturalism gets rid of the problem by making nature everything and eliminating grace; the new orthodoxy admits the fact of both nature and grace but denies to nature any efficacy in the attainment of saving grace. If the question as to how nature is the vehicle of grace is a live issue, there must be another route to take. Before attempting to pursue it, it is necessary to define our terms more precisely.

II

Nature is the sum of that reality, physical and mental, individual and social, human and subhuman, which falls within the range of man's objective and verifiable experience. It is not the whole of reality, for values and ideals, past memories and future possibilities, are also real. God is real, and while God is in nature, God is neither the whole of nature, a part of nature, nor a process of nature.

Contemporary naturalism has rendered both philosophy and religion a great service in contending that no clear-cut line can be drawn between the physical and the mental aspects of nature. We are not half body and half mind, but one personality; the world is not half mind and half matter, but one universe. Similarly, the sciences of biology, psychology and sociology have presented data which make clear the interrelatedness of the individual and the social aspects of personality, and of the interplay of conscious with

¹ *Our Knowledge of God*, p. 101. Baillie's citation from Barth is from *Nein!*, p. 20 f.

unconscious forces in both biological and social evolution. These facts of organic relation may be taken as established, though the metaphysical deductions to be drawn from them are, and will remain, in much dispute.

While naturalism is right in placing man within nature, certain assumptions made on this basis, not by all but by many naturalists, are unwarranted. The most important of these are: (1) that *all* nature is amenable to description in terms of categories applicable to physical nature (materialism), (2) that consciousness is reducible to observable bodily behavior (behaviorism), (3) that human choices and human conduct are mechanically, or at least unalterably, determined (determinism), (4) that values are a mere matter of individual preference or at most of social determination (relativism), (5) that the universe has no cosmic source, goal, or significance (atheism, humanism). These meet in the denial of the uniqueness and distinctive character of personality. If man is only an element in nature, of no more value, significance or capacity than any other part except insofar as he has a somewhat more complex nervous system, then all five of the above assumptions follow. If consistently and generally accepted, such a view would cut the roots from under, not only religion, but every kind of endeavor requiring moral responsibility. But if man is *in* nature yet more than nature, as his power to understand, appreciate, criticize and control nature indicates, then the first four of the five assumptions noted above become indefensible.

What of the fifth? Religious naturalism of the Wieman type does not ally itself with materialism, or behaviorism, or mechanistic determinism, or a subjective relativism. It attempts to undergird theism by affirming that values are over-individual and cosmic, and that in their progressive integration and mutual support, God is at work. Is the attempt successful?

In my judgment the result is unsatisfactory, and for the same reason that a naturalism which denies the uniqueness of human personality is unsatisfactory with regard to man. If man is simply an element in nature along with other elements he cannot exercise any determinative control; if God is simply a process in nature, even a high and valuable process, He cannot be the source and goal of values—much less the object worthy of supreme loyalty and devotion. Man has to be a person before he can assume his rightful place in nature; God must be personal, else He cannot be the ground of either cosmic order or cosmic values. Professor Wieman, if I understand him correctly, is willing to wrest man from the toils of natural-

ism, but not God. As I read him, he seems always to be claiming for his type of theism the values of a personal God without being willing to affirm personality in God.

If either through the channel of the historic Christian tradition or of idealistic philosophy, God is thought to be a Personal Being supreme in wisdom, power, and love, the problem takes on a different aspect. We do not need to attach to God all the attributes of human limitation to conceive Him in personal terms, and any analogies drawn from human experience must be used with caution lest He cease to be the Most High. Yet the relation of God to the world as creator and sustainer of all nature, and as judge and redeemer of that part of nature which is man, is meaningless apart from divine personality. Before nature can be the vehicle of grace, both nature and grace must proceed from the Living God.

But what of grace? While no single meaning can be attached to it, it is a much simpler term than nature. The reason is that everybody talks about nature, while only those who believe in grace (or are irritated by it) take the trouble to use the word.

Grace is the free, loving, personal activity of God for the salvation of undeserving men. All of the adjectives and most of the nouns in this statement require elaboration.

"Free as the grace of God" is a phrase which has survived the encroachments of secularism to appear occasionally even in the diction of the nonreligious. Free of what? The theological systems most concerned to stress the divine initiative tend to decry works as a means of grace, and therefore to give the impression that it is free of human effort. Yet faith and repentance are its preconditions, and these are not passive states. If Paul in rejecting the efficacy of works had meant to identify saving faith with moral passivity, the pastoral exhortations with which his letters abound would be pointless. Grace is not without cost; yet it is free, for God imparts it graciously, spontaneously, naturally, without coercion or constraint.

To say that grace is imparted *in love* is to affirm the basic insights of New Testament Christianity as epitomized in John 3. 16, and to reject all propitiation, substitution and governmental theories of the atonement. It connotes the willingness, even the yearning eagerness, of God to forgive the sinner and empower the weak. And grace can be neither free nor loving unless it is *personal*. In a Person-to-person relation only, are the conditions

fulfilled by which it can be wrought. To say that it is the *activity* of God is to emphasize the dynamic character of the total relationship between God and man, not only in redemption but in creation and providence. To say that men do not deserve it is both to emphasize the divine initiative and to affirm what any sensitive soul must admit upon introspection if he is honest with himself.

The most difficult and most crucial term in the definition is *salvation*. From what, to what, and by what are men saved? From sin, or from finiteness, or both? And if from both, from both together or by a different process for each? To moral victory, to emotional exaltation, or to new insights? To blessedness in this life only or in the next? By a common course for all men? Or was Francis Thompson right when he wrote:

"There is no expeditious road,
To pack and label men for God,
And save them by the barrel-load"?

Upon the answers given to these questions hang most of the problems of theology and of religious experience. The more inclusive the answers the more likely to be true—up to the point where inclusiveness runs into generality. To be converted means in psychological terms to get a new center of loyalty and devotion, a revaluation of values in which the former self-regarding interests are subordinated, an enhancement of sensitivity of imagination and of power for action in the light of ends projected as the will of God. In theological terms this means that the curse both of sin and finitude is lifted, and man becomes a new creature.

That such regeneration (or at least such change) takes place, and that by it the course of individual lives and of history is altered, is an objective fact. We must ask now whether nature is the instrument by which it occurs, and if so, in what manner.

III

The most obvious and perhaps the most important aspect of the question is the relation of creation to redemption. Is the very fact that there is a world, with human selves a part of it, an evidence of divine grace? The answer hinges upon the meaning of grace. I see no good reason to reject the view that creation is the free, loving, personal activity of God. In spite of the complexities of the problem of evil, both the order in nature and the values in human social experience reinforce the affirmations of Hebrew-

Christian faith. Not only God, but man, may look upon creation and call it good.

Yet grace is more than free loving personal activity on the part of God. It requires also in some sense man's *salvation*. At this point any attempt to identify creation with redemption breaks down. All men, however miserable, enjoy by virtue of existence more or less of the sustaining power of nature. Our lives are set in a physical, biological, social framework from which the only escape is death, and our reluctance to die gives illogical evidence that this order of nature makes a claim upon us. But if this sustaining power of nature is to be called "sustaining grace," the term grace loses any distinctive meaning. If *to be* is to be saved, then all living creatures are more or less saved, and there is no point in talking about being saved by grace.

The elimination of grace from the vocabulary of religious naturalism is thoroughly consistent with its presuppositions. Less consistently, some other theists try to retain grace (or some equivalent in terms of salvation through growth) and do so on the basis of the identification of God with the curative processes of nature. It will not work. Natural theology will carry us to the point of affirming a God of sustaining care who manifests His goodness in "our creation, preservation and all the blessings of life." But it will not take us to a God of grace.

Reacting from liberalism's tendency to identify the work of an immanent God with natural processes, exponents of the neo-Reformation theology go to the opposite extreme and talk as if nature had nothing to do with salvation. *Development* is anathema, as savoring of human presumption. Christian education is not growth in Christian personality through a right use of nature: it is apprehension of and witness to the revelation of God in Christ. At the Oxford Conference, difference of opinion on this point was so sharp that the work of the Education section was nearly wrecked by it, and compromise was reached only by stating in the report two alternative views. It would be hard to find a more thoroughgoing denial of the efficacy of nature in the work of Christian education than is implied in the statement, "Her (the Church's) real concern is with regeneration, which can never come about as the result of a process of development but is an act of God."² Taken seriously, such a separation of nature from grace undercuts any effort for the amelioration of those physical and social aspects of nature in which

² Oxford Conference Report, Section IV, 2 (f).

men must find their life, and therefore their salvation. It limits the function of the Christian as God's agent in salvation to witness-bearing—and if held to consistently not even this would be in order, for to bear witness requires communication through a physical body.

As in most moot matters, the truer view lies not in either extreme but in a mediating position which makes room for the truth in each. The problem centers in the nature of God. If God is wholly transcendent, He will either refuse to vouchsafe His grace to men through nature, or will use nature only by a *tour de force* or intervention in which a miracle occurs. Salvation is then limited to the saving work of Christ, and there is no salvation in any degree or manner except through the Christian channel. If God is wholly immanent, either there is no grace, or so general a grace that anybody of sympathetic imagination and some knowledge of natural processes can appropriate it. Evangelism is then repudiated as a form of religious hysteria, and religious education becomes character development with little to distinguish it from the work of the public schools.

If God is a Personal Being, both immanent and transcendent, the creator and sustainer, the judge and redeemer of men, neither of these extremes can follow. As nature is the vehicle of revelation, but only as there is a subjective apprehension of what is objectively revealed, so nature is the vehicle of grace to those who will lay hold upon it, *and not to others*.

The graciousness of nature is instrumental, not intrinsic, to salvation by the grace of God. It requires to be joined with "saving faith" in the God made manifest in Christ before it will have its fullest power. Though the Christian revelation is not the only avenue to grace, without it men are inclined to view nature merely as the sphere of a general beneficence spotted with evil. When nature is seen from the Christian standpoint it takes on a new character. John Masefield has given a classic description of this experience in "The Everlasting Mercy," where he represents Saul Kane as saying,

"O glory of the lighted mind!
How dead I'd been, how dumb, how blind!
The station brook, to my new eyes,
Was babbling out of Paradise,
The waters rushing from the rain
Were singing Christ has risen again. . . .
The lights in huntsman's upper story
Were parts of an eternal glory."

Not only the physical universe with its order and beauty, but the social process with its communication from the past and community in the present, becomes the carrier of God's gracious and saving power. The problem of evil, though never solved, is redeemed by the assurance that nothing can pluck us out of the Father's hand. The intimations of theistic philosophy then become, not substitutes for or foes of Christian faith, but its reinforcement and ally.

The question of the relation of "saving" to "sustaining" grace is on this basis largely one of temporal continuity. No person can retain without diminution the fervor of religious feeling, or the light of religious illumination, which comes at high moments. For most Christians the greater part of life is spent on the plains, not on mountaintops. The continuous nourishing of the religious life through worship and the many "means of grace" is necessary, and the consequent awareness of being sustained by God may be termed "sustaining grace." The true evangelical theology is not "'Tis done! the great transaction's done!" but rather "Moment by moment I'm kept in His love." This is something quite different from saying that without conscious effort or response on man's part, God imparts sustaining grace by way of nature.

By such an approach, Christian education can be both Christian and educative, as it tends not to be in either contemporary naturalism or supernaturalism. Religious naturalism makes ample room for education, and for some important aspects of religious education, but in its stress upon growth in meaning and value it fails to make clear to what or by what in historic Christianity the developing organism is to grow. Religious supernaturalism makes focal the act of regeneration by the grace of God but undercuts the educative process. Fortunately we do not need to choose either alternative.

At several crucial points the procedures of religious education will be altered if it decides to take grace seriously without excluding nature. The first of these is the Bible. Apart from the Bible we should know something of the revelation of God in nature, but we should know nothing of the *grace* of God—of a living, loving, saving deity who in justice and mercy condemns yet forgives His erring children. From present trends we may anticipate a return to the Bible as the center of the church-school curriculum in the next few years. A second is recovery of a sense of sin—a term which has so far got lost in contemporary education that many children grow up without having any connotation to attach to the word. A third is the reality

and the importance of conversion—not as a substitute for Christian nurture but as an element in it. The experience may be called commitment or decision or religious awakening rather than conversion, but it cannot be omitted if the Christian is to make the personal appropriation of divine grace which is a vital aspect of its reality. A fourth is clarification of the mission of the Church as the carrier of the Christian gospel, and therefore of the gospel of grace, as mediated through the Christian community.

That nature is the vehicle of the saving and sustaining grace of a God both immanent and transcendent, a Personal Being acting freely in love for undeserving men who must personally appropriate His gift, is the primary tenet of evangelical liberalism. It is not a new concept. But the fact that it is not new is no sign that it is not true! It is closer to the truth than is any alternative segment of contemporary thought, and an important field now groping in the dark for a theology might profitably explore its implications.

The Letters of Isaac Penington

HOWARD J. CONN

IT IS a wonderful thing, to witness the power of God reaching to the heart." So wrote Isaac Penington to a friend in 1668, a sentence so simple that it might easily be overlooked, except that the life of Penington himself throws such light on these words that we recognize them as summarizing the essential elements in the religious experience of that great soul who was among the most brilliant converts of Fox to the first generation Society of Friends. In Penington's letters we have the record of one who never ceased to "wonder" at God's grace, who devoted all his energies to "witness" among friends and acquaintances to the Light, who experienced God as "power," and who knew Him as reaching into the intimate heart of man.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE LETTERS

Most men and women in the twentieth century have never heard of Isaac Penington, and only the research student is attracted to read his *Works* which run into several volumes; but one hundred and four of his letters have been collected in a two hundred and eighty page book that every Christian could read with delight and profit as one of the devotional classics of the spiritual life.¹ These letters, most of them brief, reveal the spirit of one who could combine a personal concern for the individual to whom he was writing with a clear presentation of the general religious truth which he felt it in his heart to bring to the attention of that person, and who also was not inhibited from conveying on paper the passionate intensity of a spirit to whom the fullness of God's presence was overwhelming. Frequent are such outpourings as these: "O that thou mayest daily feel that holy birth of life, which is begotten by the Father, and lives by Faith in Him!" (XXXVII) and "O Lord my God! discover to thirsty souls, what it is that withholds them from the living waters; that they may not labour and spend their strength in vain, in duties and ordinances invented by man, for that which may lull asleep for the present, but can never quiet the cry of the living seed, nor ever satisfy the soul" (IX).

¹ Isaac Penington, *Letters*. Friends' Book Store, 304 Arch Street, Philadelphia.

These letters are very much alive even to the modern reader, as in their introductions and conclusions they catch the atmosphere of the one to whom they are addressed. Penington seems never to have written except when he had a definite message, as when he could say (we cannot be sure with what cheer this particular one was received!), "This morning, the consideration of thee was strong upon my spirit, how that thou was stricken in years, and must shortly pass out of this world, and give an account to God; and this earnest desire was in my heart, that thou mightest be fitted and rightly prepared, to give an account, as the Lord, the great, righteous, and impartial Judge, might own and approve of, to thy eternal joy; for which end, two things were upon my heart to propose to thee, to be rightly considered by thee" (VIII).

There is a contagious specificness in letters addressed "To a Parent on the religious care of children," "To a couple about to marry," "To a Friend in London, supposed to be written on occasion of the Plague," "To his brother Arthur, who became a Roman Catholic," "To Sarah Elgar, consolation on the death of her child." Simplicity and charm characterize the names of those to whom these letters are addressed, names which to us have the ring of anonymity, yet remind us that Penington never forgot the human situation when he wrote "To Thomas Walmsley," "To Bridget Atley," "To Widow Hemmings," "To Elizabeth Stonar," "To the Lady Conway," "To Abraham Grimsden," or "To Sir William Armorer (so styled)." The latter was a nobleman responsible for Penington's imprisonment.

Unknown as these names may be to us today, they nevertheless are an essential part of Penington's letters, just as Saint Paul's commendation of "Phebe our sister" and greetings to Priscilla and Aquila are priceless touches in his epistles. To the critic who says that these personal salutations are an anticlimax to the New Testament letters, Professor Luccock has answered that Paul's desire "to be remembered to all the boys and girls" is the greatest peroration possible. No matter how true the doctrine a man may expound, it is always the individual men and women whom he addresses that really matter.

You and I are the Thomas Walmsleys and the Elizabeth Stonars of the twentieth century who just as surely need the message of God's power in us which constitutes the concern of the letters. The message is a timeless one and a vital one; lacking a personal acquaintance to send us these earnest

appeals, we can do no better than read thoughtfully the letters of Penington, as he devotedly addresses himself to people like us on problems such as ours.

Isaac Penington's life dates between 1616 and 1679. He was a member of a respected and well-to-do family, his father serving as Lord Mayor of London in 1642. From his early days he gave himself to the study of theology and to the earnest seeking of God. In 1654 he married a widow, Lady Mary Springett, who shared his religious interest and who herself became one of the influential Quaker writers. Her daughter by a previous marriage became the wife of William Penn. The serious interest of Isaac and Mary Penington in the Society of Friends dates to an incident in 1657 when they were walking through a public park and were accosted by an itinerant Quaker on horseback who ridiculed them for their finery and their pride. His earnestness and simplicity struck forcibly these two sensitive spirits who for some time had been dissatisfied with their spiritual attainment. Yet Isaac was a theologian and a gentleman; he says later that he still disdained the Quakers for their crudeness and their smattering study. But a year later, after Mary had embraced the Society, he went to a meeting at the house of John Crook in Bedfordshire at which George Fox spoke. "And indeed, when I came, I felt the presence and power of the Most High among them, and words of truth, from the spirit of truth, reaching to my heart and conscience, opening my state as in the presence of the Lord. Yea, I did not only feel words and demonstrations from without, but I felt the dead quickened, the seed raised, insomuch as my heart, (in the certainty of light and clearness of true sense) said, 'This is He, this is He, there is no other; this is He whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood, who was always near me, and had often begotten life in my heart, but I knew Him not distinctly, nor how to receive Him or dwell with Him.' And then in this sense, in the melting and breakings of my spirit, was I given up to the Lord, to become His, both in waiting for the further revealings of His seed in me, and to serve Him in the life and power of His seed."² Isaac and Mary along with other members suffered a good deal of persecution in the early days of the Society. Much of their property was taken from them. He was imprisoned for Quaker practices six different times

² From a paper written by Penington in 1667 and found among his effects after his death. It is quoted in an old volume which for a long period was the standard history of the Society of Friends and referred to by members as "The Quaker Bible," but more properly entitled, "The History of the People called Quakers."

and served over five years in gaols; many of his letters were written during these periods.

II. RELIGION AS AN INWARD EXPERIENCE

The recurrent message of the letters is that suggested by Penington in the account of his convincement and final embracement of the Quaker faith, that in the moment of his illumination he felt in his heart the power of what previously had been words in his mind. He therefore gave himself to witnessing to his friends that they might not rest in an outward knowledge but come to the inward life. The question he puts is whether they have known and experienced Christ *within*, or have only a notional knowledge and belief concerning Christ *without* (VIII). "It is precious, indeed, to hear of Christ without; but it is more precious to feel him within" (XVII). Penington employs the imagery of Jesus to suggest the living and growing experience that comes to those who are rooted in the true vine: "And, dear Friends, mind the principle, mind the root, into which the Lord hath ingrafted us; that we may abide and grow therein, and daily find and feel the sap thereof springing up in us, and quickening us more and more to God" (XC).

The contrast which Penington had himself experienced and which seemed to him to constitute the chief distinction within religious circles was that between a barren intellectualism and a life-giving power. To him that contrast seemed the choice between death and life; his spiritual agony (indeed that of all leaders in the early Friends' movement) was that so many people were contented with an outward acceptance of Christian belief that was totally devoid of life-transforming power. He thus uses terms again and again that suggest the creative and vital character of religious fellowship. In almost every letter he refers to "the pure seed of life" in the heart, the phrase which best represented to him the growing effect of God in a person's life. He said of this continuous use of the word "seed," "I have met with the seed. Understand that word, and thou wilt be satisfied, and inquire no further. I have met with my God, I have met with my Saviour."

"If thou wilt have life, thou must come to that which gives life" (XXIX). This means coming to the spirit of Christ that dwells inwardly, and being conscious that one rises, goes forth, and lies down again in the mystery of the "Spirit, life and power" of God. Penington is one with the

great writers of our devotional classics in exalting this inward experience over wisdom and learning: for him the choice lay between knowledge and life. Himself a theologian and man of learning, he did not condemn theology, but in writing to people obviously not trained in it he assured them that the better part of wisdom lay in the conscious fellowship with God which it was theirs to have. "We affirm, that there is no true knowledge of Him, or union with Him, but in the seed or principle of His life in the heart" (XVII). We can well imagine that Penington was far more happy with the simple life of Christian witness than he would have been in the secluded life of the universities where his talent would have made him a worthy teacher, for he wrote that he would far rather be feeling Christ's life, spirit and power in his own heart than disputing with others about them (LXXVI). In another letter he makes the complaint which is heard by mourners in every age, that many people have more head-knowledge than they had twenty years ago, but not the savor of life which was in them then! "It is sad, indeed, that any should be convinced of Truth, and not come into subjection to it" (LXXXVIII). Yet such is common, for men may deny obedience to that of which they are convinced only in their mind, but they cannot withstand the conviction that comes with power in the heart.

Penington shared fully the Quaker distrust of all outward forms of religion because of the conviction that the spiritual life is an inward experience. He suggests that the church of Laodicea was wanting in nothing so far as outward knowledge and true ordinances were concerned, but its failure lay in the lack of life and warmth inwardly (XXIX). He understood human nature well enough to believe that ceremony, ritual and ostentation of any sort would entice the mind to draw away from the simple truth behind them. Simplicity was thus his keynote (VI). In letters to friends who had asked about various ceremonies, Penington rejected the following: tithes as "set up in the dark time of popery" (LIX); the Lord's Supper because "The outward cup and bread might easily run into idolatry" (LVIII); baptism by water because it belongs to the things which are to be shaken and pass away (LXIII); formal and set prayers because the Lord worketh at His own pleasure, and no time can be set Him when He shall breathe (LXXII); and the Catholic Church as an apostasy from the spirit and life of the apostles, with the devil transformed into the likeness of an angel, and antichrist sitting in the temple (LXI). We today cannot accept

the rigor of Penington's simplicity which led him to these judgments, but we do feel the inherent clarity of his soul in his insistence on life, vitality and reality rather than mere formalism in religion.

The conflict between the Puritans and the Anglicans was passing through intense stages during the life of Penington. He felt that at its beginnings Puritanism had been a movement toward greater simplicity and directness with God; but as the Puritans began to contend among themselves and to divide into sects, Penington realized that they were being led into a formalism similar to that against which they had reacted. In a letter written in 1670 he wrote some pertinent comments on this fact which might well make us with our twentieth century multitudinous divisions of Protestantism blush for double shame: "It is true, there was a sincerity and simplicity in many of them (the Puritans); but was not that sincerity and simplicity betrayed, and drawn out to seek the living among the dead, among dead forms, ways, and worships? For though they carried some life with them into their forms, yet by degrees the form grew, and the virtue and power of godliness decreased, and they were swallowed up in high esteem of, and contendings, each sort, for their forms; but themselves had lost what they were inwardly to God, and had inwardly received from God in the days of their former zeal and tenderness. O that they could see this! O that they could return to their Puritan state, to the sense they then had, the love and tenderness that was then in them, to the feeling of the principle of life, which they then felt, and which then wrought in them, though they then distinctly knew it not, yet they loved that which gathered their minds to God, and in which they felt ability to pray, and which opened the Scriptures and the things of God, and warmed their hearts truly and livingly in some measure. O that they were but there again! they might soon come further" (IV).

III. SALVATION AS TAKING UP FROM CHRIST'S NATURE WHAT IS CONTRARY TO OURS

It would be wrong to suggest that the letters are theological or abstract in character, for Penington's concern was not to discuss doctrine with his friends but to stir them to such a reception of the seed as would enable them to feel the power of God working in them for their regeneration. Salvation was Penington's real concern. Whatever else he wrote was for the sake of making clear the need and possibility of salvation. "The sum and sub-

stance of religion doth not stand in getting a notion of Christ's righteousness, but in feeling the power of the endless life, receiving the power, and being changed by the power" (XVIII). The emphasis on the inner life is important because it is within that area that salvation is to come. "It is by an inward virtue and spiritual life, received from Christ and held in Christ, that those who are saved are saved" (LXVIII).

Salvation is a term that has been out of vogue with the modern liberal trend, but a return to its usage is to be noted among religious leaders who are feeling today the lack of direction and force in lives that have relaxed in their relations toward God. With this felt need for a return to the old concepts there is nevertheless a healthy insistence that those terms be given meaning which gears them with the needs and problems of modern living. We cannot accept a theory of salvation which makes a man's deliverance achieved through the single act of another who lived nineteen hundred years before his time, and who by any single act of sacrifice paid for specific sins later to be committed by generations then unborn. We need a theory that is also an experience, by which each one of us can feel new life, new power, and new purpose raised up within us that will bring us nearer to that life which is the sonship of a living God. This we have in Isaac Penington.

Salvation to Penington meant living in companionship with God a life that would follow the standards of Jesus Christ. His words reveal that inner conflict between the good and the bad which has gone on within the souls of twice-born men in every age. The specific issue of the struggle may differ for different persons, but the reality of the contest between right and wrong, light and darkness, spirit and flesh, can never be mistaken. Penington presents the general framework of salvation into which each must read his own content in this very suggestive sentence: "Take up, from *His* nature, what is contrary to *thy* nature." The life of Christ confronts us with qualities that are different and above our own. It is by His Spirit and His life that we judge ourselves. The Christian way cannot better be described than the process of giving up our limited standards and deeds for those higher ones which we see in Christ. The contrasts between His nature and ours are numerous; each person must concentrate on those which reveal his own greatest weaknesses: strength and weakness, courage and fear, gentleness and harshness, spirit and lust, patience and anger, love and hate, service and selfishness, obedience and wilfulness, generosity and greed, sacrifice and

ambition, purity and deceit. We experience day by day the need of taking up from His nature what is contrary to our nature.

Penington speaks of overcoming the lusts of the flesh, of fighting the good fight of faith, of resisting the fiery darts of the tempter, of the furious assaults of the enemy in that blackness and distress of day which the soul feels before the Lord visits it. He thus was using the characteristic phrases for the description of the state of sin. The freshness of his approach lies rather in his pictures of the state of redemption, for they imply not a single act of deliverance through any outward symbolism, such as that of being "washed in the blood of the Lamb," but rather a continuous process. The soul in which the seed is planted begins to live as disciplined and as creative an experience as that in which the seed in the soil steadily moves towards its fulfilment, as first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. "As God gives the knowledge, He requires obedience; which is to be learned of God in the new spirit and life. So that, there is first a beginning of knowledge in the Spirit, a beginning of faith in the renewing power, and a beginning of obedience (in the same) to Him that calls. Then, there is an increase of knowledge, of true, pure, living knowledge, an increase of faith, and a growing more and more obedient under the exercises, judgments, and chastisement of the Father's Spirit: even till, at length, the soul comes to witness a full readiness, skill, and strength (in and through Christ, in and through the measure of the gift of grace received from Him) to obey in all things" (XIV). Salvation is thus an achievement in which is demanded obedience and faithfulness on the part of the individual as well as is expected power and grace on the part of God.

Though man must co-operate, the initiating presence of God is never doubted. "Thou must wait to know God and Christ in the mystery of their Spirit, life, and power; and by that Spirit, life, and power, find the secrets of the mystery of darkness searched and purged out, and the mystery of godliness opened and established in thy heart" (XXXIX). Penington in a noticeable number of instances refers to these three aspects of God in this set phrase, which indicates that he thought of the Divine Being in terms of vitality and generation. Such importance did Penington place on the power of God that he seems to have established a pragmatic principle that we can recognize the true spirit of Christ by the test of whether it comes with power! "Deceivers may come with Scripture words; but they cannot come with the true power" (LV). To one critic he wrote that other religions of the world

have a form of godliness, but they have not the *power* which comes through Christ to make a new creature of a man, to turn him away from his evil and make him a son of God (XXXV). To his brother Arthur, who had become a Roman Catholic, Isaac wrote a long discussion which hinges upon this point, that while the Roman Church may have good notions it lacks the vitality to effect salvation, because salvation must be experienced within rather than bought through outward ceremony. "All sides may agree in notions about the regenerating power; but all do not *receive* the regenerating power" (LXI).

As we read these words we can feel a kinship with the modern spirit of liberalism, for we today feel that the sign of regeneration and faithfulness is neither lip service nor outward symbolism but instead the test of daily living. Washington Gladden, in his great hymn, "O Master, let me walk with Thee," has given expression in devotional hymnology to our conviction that salvation is not a single act but is an attitude of heart which seeks day by day to live in companionship with the Spirit of Christ, and to do those acts of righteousness and service which that Spirit prompts. Isaac Penington's faith was similar. He suggested that those who think "praying in the name of Christ" means the use of a formula whereby a set of words will work miracles are grievously mistaken. "*The name*, wherein the asking and acceptance is, *is living*; and he that prayeth in the motion of the Spirit, and in the power and virtue of the Son's life, *he prayeth in the name*, and his voice is owned of the Father; and not the other, who hath learned in his own will, time, and spirit, to use those words relative to the Son" (XCV).

IV. AN OBJECTIVE GOD KNOWN INWARDLY

A word of rebuttal may be entered here to meet the objections of those who find in the sacramental and liturgical churches guarantee of the objective presence of God that they do not think possible in the more subjective approach of the Quakers with their emphasis on inward feelings. There has always been tension at this point.

If religion is to have any value or respect, people must not suppose it to be only a matter of human emotions. There must be a real God whom men in their worship approach but who is a Being independent of men's awareness of Him. In other words, God must be more than the projection of man's feelings. Elton Trueblood, in his Swarthmore Lecture "The Trustworthiness of Religious Experience" brings this out very clearly, and

argues cogently that the mystic's awareness *is* an immediacy of contact with objective reality. "Members of the Society of Friends are particularly prone to engage in rather facile talk about the inner life which may easily cover vagueness of thought. It is easy to talk about God being within our souls in such a way as to suggest that God has no independent existence. . . . The founders of our faith, though humble, were not for that reason tentative and theoretical. They were convinced that, in the characteristic experiences of religion, they had come to have real knowledge of God's nature, and were not merely exploring their own minds or idealizing a convenient fiction."

Isaac Penington faced this same issue in his time. He denied (XVII) the charge of one who said that the Quakers make of Christ nothing but a pattern, a light or notion, a principle in the heart of man. Penington answered that we acknowledge Christ to be a Saviour, we own the appearance of Him in the body of flesh, His sufferings, death, and resurrection; but we affirm that there is no true knowledge of Him except as it affects the purposive life in the heart. Christ is real. God is real. But to *know* them affects man's inward life. It is to live differently.

To those who would accept this emphasis of the need for feeling Christ within, Penington himself stressed the objective character of God and the need for a man to wait to be led by the Spirit rather than to drink at the muddy streams of his own conceiving (XCIV). "O that thou didst truly and understandingly know the difference between *thy own* applying Christ's blood to thyself, and *the Lamb's sprinkling it upon thee and washing thy soul therein!* and also between *thy own believing*, according to thy apprehension of things, and *His giving thee to believe* in the light of His Spirit! and between *thy own* praying in thy own spirit, and *His giving thee to pray* in His Spirit! God Himself is the teacher, in the new covenant, of all the true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, O how do the teachings of His Spirit differ from all the knowledge and learning men can attain unto of themselves!" (XLIV.)

This is an attempt to achieve a healthy balance between the two most penetrating insights of the spiritual life: on the one hand, the realization that God is the distant homeland of the finite spirit whose Goodness, Wisdom and Power are far above the ways of man; on the other hand, that the majestic Spirit of God can be approached and known intimately only in the inward depths of the human heart.

V. THE WORKINGS OF GOD IN HOURS OF TRIAL

The devotional character of these letters resembles that of the Pauline Epistles in that they are the witness of a soul who had lived close to his Lord and was thus able to bring a message of comfort, of cheer, and of courage to others who had ventured less far in the religious quest.

Comforting and strengthening as Penington's letters must have been to his friends, he never desired that these people should depend on him; like a true guide, he sought to point the way beyond himself. No words could save a man. "The end of words is to bring men to the knowledge of things beyond what words can utter. The 'eternal life,' the Spirit, the power, the fountain of living waters, the everlasting pure well is above the words concerning it" (XVI). So Penington sought through his ministry of correspondence to point others to the living God who was the Life of his life. "There is a river, a sweet, still, flowing river, the streams whereof will make glad thy heart. And learn but in quietness and stillness to retire to the Lord, and wait upon Him; in whom thou shalt feel peace and joy, in the midst of thy trouble from the cruel and vexatious spirit of this world. So, wait to know thy work and service to the Lord every day, in thy place and station; and the Lord make thee faithful therein, and thou wilt want neither help, support, nor comfort" (XXXII).

The Friends have always cautioned that the Scriptures must be read in the same light as they were written, and Penington, though he quotes from the Holy Book in almost every letter and urges his friends to read it, observes on several occasions that no man can understand the words of God except in the same spirit from which they came.

The test of a man's faith comes in the hour of trial. Here Isaac Penington shines as a minister of the Holy Spirit, for all the letters in this collection come out of the period of persecution which marked his later years. Many of them were penned from prison cells, the terrible conditions of which in the seventeenth century we can scarcely picture. This man who knew trouble wrote to friends who likewise were in sorrow and distress; out of the peace which God had given him Penington was able to minister to others a message that must have made the Divine seem very close indeed. To Bridget Atley, who was passing through distressing exercises of spirit, he could write this word of encouragement: "It is no matter what the enemy strives to do in thy heart, nor how distressed thy condition is, but what the

Lord will do for thee, which is with patience to be waited for at His season in every condition" (III). To another who, we are told, was tossed with tempests, he wrote a similar thought: "Let thy heart wait for strength to trust Him with the season; for, His long tarrying is thy salvation, and the destruction of those enemies, which, while any strength remains in them, will never suffer thee and thy God to dwell uninterruptedly together. Therefore, they must needs die, and He who hath the power to kill them, knows the way; which, to the appearing of thy sense, will be as if He meant to kill the life of *thy soul*, and not of *them*" (XL).

This belief that God afflicts us for the purifying of the good in us and for the separating out of the weakness is one which Penington uses with effectiveness many times. He had much correspondence with Lady Conway, one of the most brilliant and cultivated women of her time who suffered intensely from an incurable malady. In a letter to her he expresses this belief graphically: "If thou wilt receive the Kingdom that cannot be shaken, thou must wait to have that discovered in thee which may be shaken" (XXXVIII).

Here is a message that many of us need today. We resent the insecurity of the times, and we are baffled by the storms that beat upon our lives and institutions. Too many of us are in privileged positions so far as society is concerned, and have assumed complacent attitudes regarding our personal development. We thus tend to resent all forces which threaten change. Yet no sober reflection can lead us to suppose that we as a society or as individuals have achieved perfection. We need to be changed. The storms that break about us may well be for our purifying. Through them we may discover what cannot be shaken; through them we may be rid of that which is false and temporary. The process of evolution has not reached its zenith; earthquakes which seem calamitous are nevertheless constructive stages in a young and growing earth. Revolutions in ideas and practices are steps in the building of a stronger, better world. We do wrong to suppose the Lord on the side of the static and the completed. Every man wants to build his house on the solid rock, but he will never know how much of the foundation has got over into the sand until the winds and floods of God's testing come.

In the midst of that testing Isaac Penington knew that his God was present to comfort and to preserve the inward truth. With simplicity, even "with the tender and melting love of my heart towards thee" Penington could write to his friends notes which must have touched them equally for

his personal warmth toward them as for the high truth he transmitted, as when he wrote to Elizabeth Walmsley in a moment of trial: "My very dear Friend, Many are the trials, afflictions, and temptations, which the Lord seeth good to exercise us with, for the purifying and making us white, that He may honor His name in us and through us: but this promise stands sure in the seed, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' And, if our God be with us and for us, what can prevail against the work and design of His love and power toward us? I am deeply sensible of thy condition, feeling it, even in the tender and melting love of my heart toward thee; and this word sprang in me to thee, Look not out, but trust in the Lord, who can make things easier than they seem likely to be; and will certainly carry *His* through the hardest things, which He suffers to befall them" (XXVII).

Penington's was at basis a positive faith because he had himself experienced within what God could do. After a search through the religious societies of his time Penington had found in the simplicity of the Quaker faith the power of God filling the heart. He had not been left a searcher forever separated from the fellowship of the traditional churches, but he had himself been visited by his God and brought into joyful communion. "For God doth not strip His people naked, and gather them out of the spirit of this world, that they should be empty and desolate forever; but He gathers them into and fills them with His own Spirit, fills them with light, fills them with life, fills them with holiness, fills them with righteousness, fills them with peace and joy, in believing and obeying the gospel! And, in this Spirit, is the Kingdom known which is not of this world—the inward kingdom, the spiritual kingdom, the everlasting kingdom!—Where the everlasting throne is near, and the everlasting power is revealed! and the Lord God Omnipotent reigns in the hearts of His!" (XXIX.)

As we read these letters we pray that we too may be gathered into the Spirit where is the inward Kingdom, and that the Lord God Omnipotent may reign in our hearts.

Which Way Liberalism?

ORLO J. PRICE

THE word "Liberalism" has a variety of meanings. As an attitude of mind it existed among the Greeks—notably Socrates—as early as the fifth century B. C. Modern liberalism dates from the Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The liberal person, as contrasted with the conservative—who is usually an advocate of the *status quo*—is supposed to welcome progressive change in the direction of greater human freedom. Historically, the nineteenth century is known as the Century of Liberalism, when reference is made to the movement in the Western world for political liberty and constitutional government. There is, of course, a liberalism in religion, in art, and in literature, as well as in politics and economics; and we habitually speak of a liberal—that is—a liberalizing education.

The word "Liberalism" was not coined until well on into the nineteenth century, and then by the Spaniards. Gilbert Murray reminds us that it derives from the word *liberalis*, meaning, acting like a free man; which in turn comes from *liber*, "a free man." So we naturally connect the word liberal with liberty, liberality and the whole family of concepts having to do with that subject. And wherever we find men contending for emancipation in any form, we say that there the spirit of Liberalism is at work. Lord Morley wrote: "Respect for the dignity and worth of the individual is the root of liberalism. . . . It stands for the pursuit of social good against class interest or dynastic interest. It stands for the subjection to human judgment of all claims to external authority."

Because of this trust in the human judgment the popes have repeatedly condemned the principles of Liberalism. Pius IX, in 1864, put under the ban the entire philosophy of the liberal movement; Leo XIII, Pius X, and Pius XI re-echoed these sentiments more than once, and the Catholic Encyclopedia states that "papal infallibility was virtually a condemnation of Liberalism."

Ramsay Muir, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, writes: "Liberalism is a belief in the value of human personality, and a conviction that the source

of all progress lies in the free exercise of individual energy; it produces an eagerness to emancipate all individuals and groups so that they may fully exercise their powers so far as this can be done without injuring others; and it therefore involves a readiness to use the State for the purpose of creating the conditions within which individual energy can thrive, of preventing all abuses of power, of affording every citizen the means of acquiring mastery of his own capacities, and of establishing a real equality of opportunity for all."

Ruggiero, the author of *A History of European Liberalism*, defines Liberalism as a "deep-lying attitude," its principal postulate being "the spiritual freedom of mankind." It may be said that we usually give Liberalism credit for the achievements of democracy. In fact, von Treitschke, the greatest of modern absolutists, lays it down that "everything new that the nineteenth century has erected is the work of Liberalism." We thus think of Liberalism as the generative source of such concepts as equality, toleration, humanism, self-government, freedom of inquiry, suffrage, and civil rights. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that Liberalism derives directly from the Christian doctrine of the infinite value of the human soul.

THE PRESENT PLIGHT OF LIBERALISM

But today the very idea of Liberalism is in bad repute. To Mussolini it is a rotting corpse. The Nazis ridicule its root assumptions. The Communists despise it as the philosophy of capitalism. The historian, Ruggiero, referred to above, speaks of the "internal decay" of Liberalism. T. S. Eliot says modern society is "worm-eaten with liberalism." Harold Laski thinks the "energizing principle of liberal society is exhausted" and has ceased to propagate its kind. Professor Hocking is certain "that Liberalism as a political and economic pattern, the constellation of ideas illustrated in J. S. Mill, is finished." Yet he admits that it has been the "most successful political hypothesis of human history." And Professor Whitehead comments: "During the 70 years of its greatest triumphs, from 1830 onward, English Liberalism was slowly decaying by its failure to acquire a coherent system of practical ideals."

Even to some of those who profess devotion to its principles, as we have just noted, Liberalism seems to have failed. Reinhold Niebuhr talks of "Liberal confusions" and "Liberal romanticisms." Witcut, an English

writer, says, "Liberalism is dead; it cannot be resuscitated." While Professor Hyma, of the University of Michigan, is of the opinion that "Many American commentators . . . are apparently not aware of the fact that Liberalism has ended up (sic!) with these two parties (Communism and Fascism) as the joint offspring, or twins. . . ." And John Haynes Holmes has written that the new psychology "dooms" the liberal dogma to final extinction.

Here are a few of the specific criticisms which both friends and foes are making of the liberal position. Hocking regrets that it has failed to achieve social unity, and thinks it has bred a race of men who cannot be trusted with power or wealth. Many critics affirm that Liberalism has always held an inadequate view of the part that force, or coercion, must play in social and political life, and has taken a too optimistic view of human nature. For example, Liberalism has assumed that man is a rational being; that he would choose the good if given a fair chance; that his major interest lay in possessing liberty; and that as a race he is capable of, if not destined to, progress.

The antiliberals reply that man can hardly be called a rational being; that he is mostly passions, instincts, habits, and egoisms; that he is as likely to choose the evil as the good; that he is not so much concerned with liberty as with security; and that he prefers to be told what to do and say and think, rather than to have to decide for himself. One illustration: Jan Masaryk quotes Hitler, "The plain truth is that men are tired of liberty, and the hardy youth of today want to pass over the decayed corpse of the goddess of liberty to ordered hierarchy, war, and glory." Furthermore, these critics continue: it is by no means clear that man will ever be better than he is now; the fact is that Liberalism, if it has any place at all, is a philosophy adapted only to a people well advanced in morals and in civilization. In the words of Niebuhr: "Liberalism can tame life only if it is tame to begin with."

Again, the Antis scorn liberals because they have no program, no blueprint of society as it should be today. Mere opportunism, or muddling along, they say, is not a safe policy for such a time as this. We must plan, and planners must have goals and programs and schedules. Anyway, the ideology of Liberalism is too vague to meet the crises of today; the individualism of Liberalism is no longer practicable; technology has made democracy an absurdity; and the modern State is a mechanism so delicately

balanced that free speech and free association cannot coexist with sound and stable government. And what is more, the individual conscience must give way to the social conscience as a guide for living in the modern State. Collectivism must take the place of individualism; economic security must take the place of civil rights; and as for religion, it is to be largely expressed in the spirit and activities of the State itself.

This change of front as regards Liberalism in large sections of the world, as thus briefly and inadequately outlined, has taken place within the memory of men now living. For many of us can recall when the entire Western world was shouting for liberty; when even the Near East and the Orient were beginning to respond to the new evangel of personal freedom. In the 1870's John Morley could write: ". . . the right of thinking freely and acting independently is now a finally accepted principle in some sense or other with every school of thought that has the smallest chance of commanding the future." But with the trend so markedly in the opposite direction today one cannot help asking why? What has turned so many men from the adoration of the goddess of liberty to the unromantic wooing of the good angel of security? It is hard to believe that it was the World War alone; it is easier to think that both the War and the revolt against Liberalism were due to the same causes.

THE MARXIST EXPLANATION

The everyday Marxist is ready with his explanation. He tells us that when Liberalism in the eighteenth century secured the adoption of *laissez faire*, government shackles were taken off business and industry. The machine was then in its infancy, and the private corporation was almost unknown. There followed a period of free initiative, of organization, and invention which brought on the Industrial Revolution. As a result the population was soon divided into two groups, or classes, the employers and the employed—or, in Marxian argot—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Employers did not pay wages enough to enable the employed to buy the product which they made; the corporation gave the employing class power to evade personal and moral responsibility, to limit production, to control prices, and to abolish competition. High prices, limited production, and monopoly resulted in unemployment and depression.

The workless proletariat then reasoned with himself thus: Yes, Liberalism has emancipated us and guaranteed us civil rights; we are no longer

serfs; we own our own souls and bodies; we can go to our club, to church, to the public park, and the public library. We can even join a labor union and a political party and can vote in the elections. But those whom we elect do nothing for us. And none of these privileges give us a job. We are free men in a vacuum, possessing all the rights of free men in theory only. For none of these rights put bread into the mouths of our children or pay the rent. Patrick Henry could say: "Give me liberty or give me death"; but these are not alternatives for us. We have the liberty which Patrick Henry wanted, and can have death too—by starvation. Is it any wonder, says our radical friend, that when men find the liberty which their fathers bequeathed them to be an empty shell, they turn to something more substantial, if not so idealistic, and demand security—a chance to earn a living?

OUR PREDICAMENT

With many factors left out, this is the predicament in which we find ourselves. Liberalism in the eighteenth century gave trade and industry a free hand to hire and fire, to make and sell without let or hindrance from the government. After a century and a half we have come to a point where this freedom seems to many to be incompatible with liberty that has any actual content. Enlightened self-interest—which we now call the profit system—has not resulted in a harmonious and just social order, as Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham said it would. True, legislation early tried to correct abuses and to save intact the free business and industrial system, but it could never quite keep up with the game. Whitehead sums up the situation in these words: "The mere doctrines of freedom, individualism, and competition, had produced a resurgence of something very like industrial slavery at the base of society."

To meet the new situation, as hinted above, the social service state emerged after 1850 in England, after 1870 in Germany, and after 1900 in the United States; but even this could not ward off disaster. The decade since 1929 has given a demonstration that, no matter how good liberty may be, too much liberty for some results in too little for others. The urge to self-aggrandizement in men is too strong; the power which wealth gives is too great to be intrusted to the kind of men we produce. At this point Hocking seems to be right.

Must we then frankly admit that because the great venture of political

and economic freedom did not work out as the fathers were sure it would, we must try a new sort of control, not only in business, but in the cultural and spiritual affairs of life as well? Shall we say that because complete liberty in the realm of economics has been found to be undesirable, therefore civil and political rights and the freedom of inquiry must also go by the board? This is what has happened in the totalitarian states. Is it inevitable? Can there be no political and spiritual freedom save that based on free private enterprise in industry, or *laissez faire*? And if, on the other hand, we say that the pursuit of business and industry must in our day be restricted by government—does that doom all liberty? In other words, does liberty hang together? Is it indivisible? If so, shall we then get ready for a society regulated from bottom to top, and learn to heel, to march, to sing, and to goosestep at command? Or, is the suppression of freedom in cultural affairs that has occurred under the dictatorships merely the whim of government to achieve a smoothly running, uniform, social machine? And would the old freedoms which Liberalism demands, if existing alongside a regulated economic order, result in the sort of disunity which existed, for example, in the Weimar Republic? Such disorder that absolute and rigid control by a dictator might be required to attain an orderly society?

These are a few of the questions that face the Liberal of today. And the answer does not lie ready to hand. To date, whenever the economic order has been strictly controlled by the State, there the so-called spiritual interests of men—education, religion, press, suffrage, free discussion and free association—have also suffered from official interference. And on the other hand, whenever the economic interests have been left free, these same spiritual interests have sooner or later suffered from the handicaps thrust upon them by powerful private wealth. Thus we seem to be caught on the horns of a dilemma. Control business, we lose our liberties; leave business free, we also lose our liberties. That is, if the State does not rob us of our liberties, private wealth will.

Thus runs the argument from both history and logic. But history proves nothing and logic seldom coincides with life. The liberal may admit the correctness of the Marxist reasoning, but is unwilling to accept the conclusion. He recognizes that, as the reasoning of the fathers was faulty, so that of the children may miss the mark. And he believes that what both history and logic say cannot be done, can nevertheless come to pass. He

knows that the rights and liberties which we now possess came through long experimentation with trial and error methods; that man has never for long ceased to strive for liberty. He does not believe that men will for long accept a poor form of security as a substitute for liberty; and he is watching closely the social process in the reeking laboratory of the present, while he makes a restudy of the principles of his liberal creed.

WHAT CAN THE LIBERAL DO?

The liberal has often been accused of being too passive, and of resting back on the evolutionary doctrine of progress. But the liberals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had no such doctrine. It is true that the philosophers of the late eighteenth century believed that man could make progress by using his reason, and his successors in the following century thought progress would come of itself inevitably, but today all this is changed. The liberal-minded man today knows his history and science, and that sacrifice and struggle is the price of progress in any sphere. As a consequence we see a great movement beginning—a stirring in the tops of the mulberry trees. Books, magazine articles, conferences, resolutions, forums, broadcasts—all in the interests of “saving democracy”—are in the news. Even the intellectuals who heretofore have scorned taking sides on any controversial social issue are issuing manifestoes and exhorting their fellows to gird for the fight. While much of this defense of liberty and democracy is superficial and smacks of superpatriotism, there is clear evidence of alarm lest we be headed for some form of a regimented social order. Some so-called reformed liberals are even ready to throw their philosophy overboard, are girding on Saul’s armor and preparing to fight regimentation with regimentation, forgetting that, if a free society cannot hold its own against an authoritarian society, it is already doomed. One cannot fail to note, also, that the mind which religion requires of its prophets, namely, a broken and a contrite heart, is too often absent. That we are not making our democracy work very well is too often passed by. That we have millions of men who, because of their employment or unemployment, are without rights and thus without liberty, and who would at this hour gladly exchange an empty liberty for physical security, is forgotten. The easy-going among us assume that so long as the Constitution stands we have nothing to worry about.

This defensive effort on the part of our frightened liberals may be better than no fight at all for the democratic way of life. But it is doubtful

if speeches, resolutions, flag-waving, and red-baiting will convince that large mass who are not experiencing the blessings of freedom. If Liberalism is not to be crushed out between the upper and nether millstones of Communism and Fascism—as Hyma thinks has already taken place—a more vital and realistic campaign must be planned than is going on at present. A few demonstrations are needed—living proofs that the principles of Liberalism will work in the twentieth century. If it can be put to work to solve the problems of unemployment, of the migrant worker and share-cropper, if it can check the wanton destruction of irreplaceable natural resources, prevent private wealth from usurping functions of the State, give the backward races among us their opportunity to develop, and make a beginning with the methods of peace to supplant the methods of war both in industry and in international affairs—IF Liberalism will do some of these things soon, it will help to clinch the arguments of the writer and speechmaker.

We need also to keep in mind the Past and to link our efforts up with those of yesterday. The four hundred years during which the liberal spirit has been throwing aside the swaddling bands of medievalism have witnessed many changes of policy, method, and goals. If our task seems difficult, a study of the enormous hurdles which the drive for emancipation met in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries should give us courage for our day. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment; the English, American, and French Revolutions; the Cartesian revolution in philosophy, the attainment of civil rights in Western lands, the Resorgimento in Italy, the winning of public education, the achievement of manhood suffrage and woman suffrage, and the rise of the ideal of social security—just to call the roll of some of the prizes which Liberalism has won—recalls to the mind the terrific cost in effort and sacrifice. It also reminds us that the spirit of emancipation has taken many forms and has frequently changed front to meet the exigencies of the historical situation.

One or two illustrations of the shifts which the pioneers of freedom have made will suffice. When our federal Constitution was adopted in the eighteenth century the founding fathers were trying to protect the common man from the over-powerful State. Liberalism in Europe was struggling to set men free from despotic rulers who were reigning by divine right. Hence to the American political philosophers that government was best which governed least. A century later, when political liberty had been achieved and when the people made and unmade their own rulers, the

attitude of liberals toward government had radically changed. Now that government belonged to them, they found it to be an instrument which they could use to good effect in their struggle for further emancipation. That is, Liberalism, which in the eighteenth century regarded the State as a necessary evil, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries considered it as one of the chief means of social good. Again, the eighteenth century was determined to establish free competition as the cure-all for social and economic ills, whereas the twentieth-century liberal has discovered that so-called free enterprise is self-destructive, in that the strongest competitor—using modern devices—eliminates his weaker competitors.

Once more, as previously suggested, the liberal of the time of Darwin, Huxley and Spencer thought progress was inevitable; the modern liberal does not. The liberal once believed that if men have freedom, all other good things will be added unto them—equality, progress, property, fraternity, democracy. But no longer. He knows now that the freedom of some must be restricted if the freedom of others is to exist at all; that equality and liberty have trouble living together; that property can neutralize democracy; and that liberty may be a curse as well as a blessing. That is to say, Liberalism may, and in many points does, actually stand for the opposite of those things for which it once stood, and what once made men free may now enslave them. The test of any measure or movement, then, comes to this: does it, *in its day*, increase the common good and enrich the common life? Once free competitive enterprise did just this. That it does so in this century, the liberal is in grave doubt, and he is looking about to find a philosophy that will work as well as *laissez faire* worked in its time.

Whether the new liberal is to find his guarantees in the new totalitarian or near-totalitarian State, in the corporative State, in the co-operative State, in the socialistic State, in a State of regulated and controlled capitalism, or in some combination of these and other as yet undevised forms, is a question for the future. Already some hesitant experiments are making toward a free society under modern conditions. American liberals are watching with deep interest the New Deal. British liberals incline toward State ownership or control of public utilities. Sweden combines State ownership of industry, private profit-making enterprise, and consumers' co-operatives; while many European liberals are trying to interpret the leveling down processes of Fascism as an expression of Liberalism brought down to date!

The writer of this paper will not try to elaborate the new ideology of

Liberalism. He will be content with suggesting a few of the goals which may constitute a minimum of the good which true liberals will set before them, remembering that only historical processes aided by purposeful efforts can establish workable policies or measures. In the opinion of at least one who calls himself a liberal, seven of these goals are: 1. That every human being born into society shall share, in so far as he has the capacity, in the social inheritance, including property as well as welfare and culture; 2. That all men who desire may have access to the natural sources from which come the necessities of life; 3. That all men shall have justice without subjecting themselves to the medieval processes of our present-day legal system; 4. That the means of health which modern science has developed shall be made available for all; 5. That the weaker members of society shall be protected from exploitation by the abler and shrewder ones; 6. That each person shall have opportunity to do his share of the world's work, that is, a job; and 7. That substantial economic equality shall be guaranteed—economic equality meaning that “the satisfaction of one's urgent needs shall not be in the arbitrary control of another.”

It is not unlikely that the securing of these rights to property and culture for all; the right of justice for all; the right of access to nature's store-houses for all; and the right to work for all will call for a degree of socialization which would frighten the liberal of the nineteenth-century *laissez faire* days. Socialized medicine, socialized justice, a measure of socialized production and distribution, and more socialized property than we now have in our forests, parks, roads, playgrounds, schools, hospitals, and so on, may be found necessary before we are able to give the human personality that opportunity which Liberalism claims for men. In short, the liberal of today sees no other road to human freedom short of an increasingly larger social control.

How, even by social control, shall all these good things be achieved? Aye, there's the rub. That education for democracy must be stepped up; that more intensive teaching of Christianity is demanded; and that a higher order of citizenship is essential—all this goes without saying. Again, we must be ready to accept and even forward many of those changes in our political forms which are silently going on before our eyes. I refer, as an example, to the administrative process which is supplementing the judicial and legislative processes—such administrative processes as the Federal Trade Commission and the Securities Exchange Commission engage in. It

is by no means certain that the parliamentary system is foreordained as a permanent, never-to-be-altered scheme for democratic states. What Liberalism once established, Liberalism may one day push aside for something better. Anyway, such has been the course of history.

This much is certain. The new forms which will be the guarantees of liberty in this new age will not come to birth without assistance. Mere muddling along, trusting to the good offices of a friendly Providence, may land us where Fascist countries find themselves. We must first, with the help of our intellectuals, who now seem ready to co-operate, develop a revised liberal ideology—the new name for social philosophy. This social philosophy must be based on the new knowledge—as well as the old—which science has accumulated since the doctrines of Liberalism were propounded. We know vastly more about the nature of man than the fathers knew four hundred, or even one hundred and fifty years ago. It may be we shall find that we were too optimistic about human nature, and that human progress is harder to attain than we thought. Maybe we did not give coercion as large a place as it must have in our dealings with men. Perhaps we ignored the function of good will as mere sentimentalism instead of the vital force that it is. Mayhap we will enjoy more individualism, if we have a greater measure of collectivism. And it is certain that we shall need a more virile theology at the base—a theology which does not ignore the contribution which the so-called “natural” sciences offer to our understanding of the divine method and of the human personality; a theology which recognizes more fully the “divisive and disruptive dispositions in human nature” than liberal theology has done in the past.

Unless liberal groups can agree on some such revision and on a practical procedure to preserve the values which they hold to be of first importance, the danger is real that it will be too late, and that free society and free government will for our time perish from the earth; for it may be “later than you think.” It is not enough to wax literary and eloquent over ideal aims. Those who are wise must act in the concrete. And many of us must throw ourselves into the struggle.

Tides of Persecution

PAUL E. JOHNSON

"I WISH we had a Hitler over here," our neighbor blurted out. "That's just what America needs." If a bomb had dropped into our quiet garden I could not have been more astonished. For he was a good neighbor, an active church member, a respectable citizen of our democracy. He pushed away from the table and proceeded to deliver a molten stream of passion against the Jews who were "running this country to suit themselves." My protests were buried in a lava flood of incidents and fears that stayed not to reason. Little or no resistance came from the other neighbors present; their silent assent to his superstitions was ominous. Anti-Semitism is not good democracy, neither is it good religion nor good neighborliness. Yet "good" neighbors, "good" Christians and "good" Americans indulge in this strange form of intoxication.

I. ANTECEDENTS AND PRECEDENTS

Intolerance is not a new phenomenon. Persecution is one of the oldest stories in the memory of man. As far back as history records or legend recollects we may trace the tragic thread of resentment and exclusion. The typical pattern is found in the early pages of Genesis, where the first experiment in brotherhood failed. So in other pages and other times men differ and disagree, engage in struggles of economic, social and religious competition, hurl angry accusations and draw the blood of violence. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Over and again the plot unfolds, with consequent evasions of responsibility and justifications of cruelty. Cain was a lonely figure, fleeing as a fugitive and outcast before public opinion which was certainly against him. Other Cains have organized their persecution to gain public approval and stand their ground while casting out the persecuted, who thus become the fugitive exiles. When people live far apart they are more apt to let each other alone, but the closer we live together the more we get in each other's way and on each other's nerves. Yet in the multiplied tensions of modern congested living, persecutors have scarcely ever been in a majority. Persecution is the attack of one minority upon another.

If persecution is not to be magnified, neither is it to be minimized. For it is one of the saddest stories in the world. Persecution is a Pandora box of the foulest evils: fear, suspicion, hatred, cruelty and violence loosed upon us. Tragic sorrows are visible in the homeless, despised, maltreated and undeserved sufferings of innocent refugees. They are more prevalent though less conspicuous in the refined tortures of subtle discrimination which confront the Jew in every occupation and association around the world today. Yet sadder far than the sufferings of the innocent persecuted, are the sorrows of the persecutor. Credulity and suspicion bewitch him and snatch away his reason. Hatred and anger inflame his passions until he is beside himself and sanity gives way to uncontrolled madness. Ruthless and predatory impulses betray the divine nobility of human nature to the savage bestiality of atavistic, sadistic barbarism.

From another viewpoint persecution becomes one of the most glorious stories enacted upon the stage of this planet. The heroism of victims of persecution is breath-taking: courageous in danger, patient in suffering, faithful in death. Is not the stature of the human race raised to new heights of grandeur by these noble examples of the power to endure the outrageous slings of unjust misfortune? The glory of persecution is further manifest in the kindness of friends who at times of distress rally to aid the afflicted. The generosity of benevolent Christians to aid Jewish refugees is matched in spirit and enlarging effect by the gifts of Jews to the relief of Christian refugees. It is recently reported that the United Jewish Appeal has raised \$225,000 to be used for Catholic and Protestant refugees in Europe. And this is over and above the willingness of Jews to bear a large share of the cost of rehabilitating the unseen and unknown refugees of their own people.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake" is a proposition that well stands the test of time and skepticism. How much more difficult it is to change the personal pronoun from *they* to "Blessed are *ye*, when men shall revile you, and persecute you," and believe that persecution is our own blessing. It would be indelicate to rejoice in the persecutions of others, or even to labor the point of their meritorious value, but if we are as brave as Jesus we come to see the wisdom of His counsel to "be exceeding glad" under the lash of persecution. So persecuted they the prophets and heroes; it may be that the stimulus is an indispensable condition of heroism and prophecy. Rewards in heavenly treasure of the spirit may well offset and outweigh the losses in earthly comforts.

II. WHY PERSECUTION?

Prevalent customs with so long a past are not historical accidents. Persecution has a history because it is rooted deeply in human nature. What are the psychological and sociological causes that motivate recurrent tides of anti-Semitism? Among the multiplicity of cross-currents many factors are surface ripples, superficial and inconsequential. When we plumb beneath the surface to basic considerations there are submerged forces that ebb and flow. Far more distant and powerful in controlling these tides are solar and planetary attractions that seem to involve the stars in their courses and the entire cosmic design. It may bring perspective upon these waves of emotion to explore briefly a few of their causes.

Surface causes of anti-Semitism are *differences*. The most obvious differences among social groups are external and, therefore, quite superficial. Color of skin, complexion, hair texture, features, stature, dialect and names can be noted at a glance. They are widely used to classify people into "races," castes, classes and other prejudicial groupings. Typical habits, customs, folkways, taboos and characteristic mannerisms are distinctions almost as obvious by which we come to classify each other. But individual differences within any group are wider than between one group and another. And many of the class labels taken as typical characteristics of a people like the Jews are more fictitious than factual, consisting of folklore and popular prejudice rather than accurate description. To magnify the external and accidental differences in these ways is to distort the true nature and essential traits of people.

The unlike draws dislike. Aliens and strangers are resented because they have strange ways and alien peculiarities. To differ from our familiar stereotype is to disagree with our accepted standards and, therefore, to be wrong. Yet variety is a basic value everywhere rescuing us from dull, drab monotony. Variety is the spice of life, the key to interest and value. Variety is the means to progress in suggesting other ways that may be better than our mediocre traditions, providing in the exploration of differences the spur to needed inventions for the improvement of life in manifold ways. What if every minority should be lost in complacent majorities? Without the prophetic voice crying in the wilderness, religion would set into rigid forms of ceremonial legalism, going through the motions of worship but only hollow echoes of vivid religious experience. Without the

minority movement agitating for social justice and overdue reform, parties in power are corrupted to political machines to perpetrate patronage and graft upon a decadent people.

In this sense differences are far from superficial. Neither democracy in government nor justice in human relations can survive without freedom to be different. "Make America safe for differences" expresses the growing awareness that intolerance is our public enemy number one. Intimidation of minorities is the shortest cut to the regimentation of dictatorship. Suppression of freedom always begins by muzzling the most unpopular minority, and from that point moves toward denial of civil rights all along the line. Respect for differences and appreciation for a larger range of possible values is essential to every good society. To tolerate differences is not enough. The alert mind will eagerly invite them and faithfully appreciate every value that may contribute to the rich diversity of life abundant for all.

A consideration of differences has already taken us beneath surface contrasts to deeper issues. What now are the undercurrents that stir human emotions beneath the outward appearances? After the manner of the current depth-psychology, we may undertake to "psychoanalyze" the submerged motives of the persecution complex. The conscious mind is often not aware of these deeper forces, but they evidently exert a powerful and often predominant influence upon behavior. Among the various unconscious strivings that focus upon this problem, we select three that seem to agitate and energize the persecutor.

The *lure of superiority* is surely a major motive in the persecution complex. (This phrase "persecution complex" is sometimes employed to designate one who suffers from the delusion that others are persecuting him, but it should be noted that we are here referring to the motives underlying the desire to persecute others.) Striving for superiority is evident in the claim to be a chosen people. Fictions of Aryan and Nordic superiority are flaunted before our eyes today, but we should not forget that at one time or another every people, not excepting the Hebrew, have announced themselves as the chosen people. The psychological technic of this appeal is to elevate one's self by degrading others, to indicate preference for one's own kind by excluding other kinds. Note Kipling's crude assumption invading one of the greatest Christian hymns, referring to "lesser breeds

without the law." Note a further illustration in the prayer of the publican who thanked God that he was not as other men.

The *lust for power* is another drive that eventuates in persecution. Dictators desire a total following and brook no opposition to their manifest destiny. So they crush all minorities, blot out every threat of difference, and smother the dangerous uprising of independent ideals. The will-to-power rides on the swift back of frantic fear that power is slipping beyond one's reach with every suggestion of a rival to his supremacy. Out of this panic the power lust forces uniformity on all by desperate methods of frequent demotions, concentration camps and blood purges. The struggle for power goes madly on with every intrigue and strategy, betraying its weakness unconsciously by ever increasing bodyguards and secret police. Few power graspers have exceeded the fury of Herod who ordered the slaughter of all male babies on the mere rumor that an unknown king had been born.

Another mainspring of persecution is the *craving to escape* the blame for evil. It is hard to accept personal responsibility for any evil. The line of least resistance is to assume that evils are no fault of ours. Find a scapegoat to blame for whatever is wrong and this will seem to demonstrate that we are innocent. With ancient Israel it was customary to heap the sins of all the people upon a sacrificial goat and drive him out into the wilderness as a symbolic witness of purification. By some strange irony this ceremonial purgation has been adapted by many gentiles in heaping their sins upon the Jew as the scapegoat. Communists and other unpopular symbols are also loaded up with convenient epithets and cast out daily from among us. The inevitable recurrence of anti-Semitism in times of economic depression or political distress indicates the more urgent need for escape devices when the times are out of joint.

There is another cause of persecution more significant than either surface differences or undercurrents noted in the strivings for superiority, power and escape. This greater cause is not weakness but strength, not demonic but heavenly forces. It is like the tremendous attractive power of the sun, moon and stars upon the tidal movements of our planet. Quite as likely the whole universe with the irresistible sweep of cosmic purpose is at work in the influence of this master motive. The master motive to which I refer is *loyalty to great ideals*. Ideals when lifted up draw all sensitive, responsive souls to them.

Does it seem strange to point to ideals as the chief cause of persecution?

The power of ideals in this situation operates in the loyalty of men and women who are persecuted. It might be noted that persecutors, like Paul on the road to Damascus, go forth in the cause of their ideals to conquer in that sign, and exercise the utmost vigor to convert or exterminate the adherents to rival ideals. Often we see men in their blindness persecuting out of this narrow loyalty. But we are now concerned with the unshakable idealism of those who are courageous enough to suffer for their convictions. Evidently this is what Jesus meant when He blessed those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Loyalty to ideals invites persecution. The idealist is unpopular with those who do not share the ideals. He appears to be better and holier than they. The conscientious objector to what the majority do or believe is a sharp thorn in the side of their complacency. The Jew might have avoided persecution if he had only been willing to surrender his ideals. No other people have been so often led into captivity or dispersed everywhere among other people whose language and culture they had to adopt. The Hebrews might more easily than not have intermarried and submerged their ideals in the culture and customs of the heathen ways of Canaan, Egypt or Babylon, Greece or Rome, Europe or America. A vanishing fringe have adopted gentile ways and lost their identity by assimilation into the vast encompassing and protective majority. Three thousand years of persecution means three thousand years of heroic loyalty to their unpopular ideals. Where on the stern face of this world have any people shown higher faith or deeper faithfulness than the Hebrew people? Others have yielded their ideals as soon as they were outnumbered; which is the safe and sure way to escape persecution. But having once committed their way unto Yahweh and covenanted to be His people they have suffered all the cruel cunning men could devise rather than forsake their religious faith or surrender the holy mission God had entrusted to them.

How much poorer the world would be if the Jew had compromised and taken the easy detour that most of us take around persecution! How impoverished mankind would be if these unconquerable idealists had given up monotheism and their priceless devotion to one supreme God! What if they had forgotten their pure and spiritual worship in the popular temptations to idolatry and sacred prostitution? What if they had stilled the prophetic voices crying out for righteousness and justice down the centuries? What if they had deserted their divine calling and left us without the Bible

record of man's search for divine good culminating in the magnificent discovery of the love of God and man? How much coarser and more brutal our race would be without the unfaltering faithful announcing decalogues and laws of just respect for all! A people who not only teach but enact the difficult ideal of the suffering servant to redeem the poor and afflicted by his own stripes, to bring light and peace and salvation by his sorrows, to be despised and rejected of men for the sake of others, show us how to be children of one Father. Surely God is in this thing, and will bring His eternal purpose of forgiving love to larger effect by such sacrificial idealism.

III. HOW STEM THE TIDE?

There is reason to believe that God will make even the wrath of men to praise Him. But that is no reason to provoke men to wrath or suppose that God is pleased with the anger and violence of persecutors. A resourceful leader will use unfit instruments only if there is nothing better to serve his cause. The presence of a loving God must have a very different influence on different men according to their purposes. God is with the persecuted idealist to sustain him, while at the same time He is with the cruel persecutor to restrain his blind vengeance. Such a God suffers with every victim of oppression, is wounded by his hurts, yet not to death or defeat but to the ultimate victory of the cause of righteousness. Our part in situations of conflict is therefore to do God's will, and work with Him so far as we are able to quench the fires of persecution and give our support to the loyalty of persecuted idealists. It is our calling of God in every godlike way to help Him to stem the tides of anti-Semitism and turn human energies into more constructive and worthy achievements.

Renewed outbursts of bitterness are poured upon the Jews in Central Europe at the present time. Terrible attacks upon innocent people break family ties, confiscate earned goods, herd and drive multitudes forth upon refugee roads. Without reason or restraint, insensitive to appeals of humanity, mad with lust to destroy, this tempest lashes around us. There are disconcerting indications that these waves of intolerance are beating upon our shores and whipping latent prejudice to hurricane velocity. Professional promoters are busily engaged arousing the passions of Americans and organizing movements that follow the tactics of Hitler and Nazi propaganda. How many organizations there are, and where they originate is

difficult to know, for most of them are secret and disguised by a variety of ruses. Estimates vary from 50 to 800. Benson Y. Landis in a careful study of "Current Manifestations of Organized Anti-Semitism" (*Information Service*, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, June 10, 1939) offers 150 as a conservative figure. A number of such organizations employ Christian labels, as the recently exposed "Christian Front," whose program is obviously anti-Christian in aim and method. Stanley High in his investigation of "Star Spangled Fascists" (*Saturday Evening Post*, May 27, 1939) designates seven groups as having "a strictly evangelical front." A gospel tabernacle in our neighborhood exploits hungry emotions by importing a notorious Kansas City orator to pack the town hall and shout reverberating blasts against Jews and Communists.

What can we do about these threats to understanding and harmony? How may we stem the rising tides of hatred and persecution?

First, we must demand the truth. With the powerful facilities at hand for false propaganda, we shall need to search earnestly for the facts. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis (130 Morningside Drive, New York City) is at work to investigate and refute many vicious falsehoods. The American Association for the Advancement of Science in December, 1938, issued a manifesto signed by 1,284 American scientists representing 167 universities and research institutes protesting the dismissal and persecution of scientists in German universities on political and racial grounds. The Association declares that "Science is wholly independent of national boundaries and races and creeds, and can flourish only when there is peace and intellectual freedom." The American Anthropological Association in the same month made timely declaration that there is "no scientific basis for discrimination against any people on the ground of racial inferiority, religious affiliation or linguistic heritage." The Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom (519 West 121st Street, New York City) is uniting educators to correct errors and defend American democracy by combating racial and religious intolerance.

The editors of *Fortune* in 1936 made an exhaustive study of "Jews in America," showing that Jewish influence does not dominate the economic and opinion-forming aspects of American life. In the banking world the largest Jewish house has only 2.88% of the business. There are two Jewish firms in large steel production. There are three Jews prominent in the auto industry, while the only one in the tire industry has sold his interest

to a gentile. The clothing industry is largely carried on by Jews, but in wool they have only 10% of the business, in silk 15% and in cotton 5%. The chain stores are 5% Jewish controlled and the grocery chains only 1%. In newspapers the *New York Times* is the only outstanding paper operated by Jews, and surely no one would consider this great paper a pernicious influence. In magazines *The New Yorker* and *Esquire* are the only ones of major circulation in Jewish hands. In moving pictures three of the eight principal companies are owned largely by Jews. In the professions and in government service the Jews appear in just about or less than their proportion in the total population. Few Jews are in leadership of radical movements. Of 27,000 members of the Communist party, less than 4,000 are Jews. It is evident from this and other studies that Jews are not united on any public issue except loyalty to their own religion. They are so naturally scattered and divided in position and viewpoint, that there is no factual basis to the superstition that they dominate American life. The truth alone will free our minds from bondage to error and falsehood.

Second, we can practice friendship. Friendship is taught by both religions as the code of human relations. "Surely thou shalt open thy hand to thy brother, and to the stranger within thy gates." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father." If men actually believed these teachings and sought faithfully to practice them, persecution would cease and our society would become a paradise of heavenly happiness on earth. Rabbi Morris Lazaron, writing on *Common Ground* (1938, page 258), gives practical and effective counsel:

Christians, get a Jewish friend. Jews, get a Christian friend. No Christian who has had a Jew for his friend has ever felt the same toward Jews and Judaism. No Jew who has ever had a Christian friend has ever felt the same toward Christians and Christianity. And perhaps these strands of friendship, when there are enough of them, shall weave the pattern of a new world.

The National Conference of Christians and Jews (300 Fourth Avenue, New York City) is opening channels for the expression of such friendship in effective ways. Goodwill teams, speakers and radio programs, research and helpful literature, institutes of human relations and local round tables

bring together Catholics, Jews and Protestants in interfaith associations. Since 1928 this one organization has helped to arrange more than 30,000 interfaith seminars and conferences throughout the country. A Religious News Service covering significant events and activities in all faiths is syndicated to over 200 subscribing newspapers and periodicals. The annual Brotherhood Day has now expanded into a week of goodwill activities each February. Friendship offers the most direct method of replacing prejudice and fear with trust and appreciation.

Third, we can bring mutual service to human need. Jonah and the good Samaritan are classic parables from each Testament pointing out the inescapable duty of serving aliens and strangers. The Golden Rule, which is by no means the exclusive claim of one religion but the universal demand of every great religion, holds up mutual service as the standard of conduct. In recent years almost every major religious body in Europe and America has declared its conviction and purpose that brotherhood and love must overcome hatred and strife. Leading Catholics have announced by radio and press that the Popes from Gregory in 538 to Pius XI have condemned "that vicious form of intolerance known as anti-Semitism," and pledged the strength of their great Church to Christian tolerance. The World Conference on Church and State declared at Oxford, England, July, 1937: "The sin of man asserts itself in racial pride, racial hatreds and persecutions, and in the exploitation of other races. Against this in all its forms the Church is called by God to set its face implacably and to utter its word unequivocally, both within and without its borders." The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America meeting in Buffalo, New York, in December 1938, called for a "united effort to combat anti-Semitism in North America." The Friends Service Committee, the International Refugee Committee, the American Council for the Aid of Refugees are all giving eloquent witness to the Golden Rule of mutual service to human need.

Fourth, we may dedicate ourselves to work together with God and each other for peace and justice. Some demand justice first and peace afterward, but violent thrusts at justice only create new injustices as the balance of power passes into the hands of other selfish exploiters. The only enduring peace is founded on justice and the only enduring justice is secured by peaceful methods. It is this irrevocable truth that makes the religious way of life the greatest hope of the world today. Other reforms and movements trust their strength to numbers of the mass and power of violent force to

compel the social or political change desired. The religious way seeks to change the situation from within by appealing to the best aspirations of men and persuading them voluntarily to effect needed reforms for the sake of glorious achievements in transforming evil into good. No power is greater than the attraction of sheer goodness, unconquered by every evil which assails it.

Persuasion is slower than violence. It is growth requiring the patience and perspective which Spinoza called *sub specie eternitatis*, which we need in trying to see as God sees and work as God works. If we are to work with God we must use His method to achieve His purposes. In the crush of despair that arises from the collision of conflicting forces men lose their heads and do foolish and desperate things in frantic efforts to meet the crisis of the moment. Some are so overwrought by the pressure of the forces of evil as to lose faith in God and man. From loss of perspective and loss of faith come the explosions of passion and violence that ruthlessly destroy human values and lay waste the progress of centuries.

To cure this "warring madness" we shall need above all else a revival in true religion. No other solution is adequate. We have tried other ways in vain, one after another, until there settles upon our time the twilight of bitter disillusion shading into the dark of utter hopelessness. But there is hope in working with a God who is not a tribal deity but the Father of all men, in whose universal family we are brothers one of another. There is hope in offering our deepest determination to such a God, that He may consecrate our powers for His purpose and use us to help create peaceful and harmonious justice in our sphere of influence. There is hope in sharing the sorrows along with the joys of living heroically at this dangerous cross-roads of time and eternity, doing our best to bring God's eternity into our time and follow the divine destiny that makes us brothers in truth, in love and in service.

The Command to Love

Its Meaning and Some Applications

HORACE T. HOUF

ONE of the hardest of all paradoxes is the command to love. To love seems to mean the giving of self without calculation and without reservation; yet this is made to become a matter of volition. The right to be loved and the prerogative of loving appear to be the most spontaneous of human interests. Still, the noblest ideal ever set systematically before man commands that love shall be deliberate, and comprehensive and lasting. That the situation and all man holds precious require the practice of love is indisputable. But the how, and where, and by whom, those are the rub. The whole world, and every life, demands love. It is indispensable. It does not arrive spontaneously, nor does it thrive so. And it seems it can not be commanded. So there we are. We must—and we can't.

The need for the attitude and the practice of love is beyond question. From man's earliest times until now the need has been varyingly real. And by human seers that need has been given voice. One of the most systematic demands for love the world has ever known was made by Mo Ti, a vigorous thinker who flourished in China about 400 B. C. He saw clearly the heart of the world's need and stated it so rightly that his words might stand today with equal or magnified force. Witness what he said: "The mutual attacks of state on state; the mutual usurpations of family on family; the mutual robberies of man on man; the want of kindness on the part of the sovereign and of loyalty on the part of the minister; the want of tenderness and filial duty between father and son—these and such as these are the things injurious to the empire. All this has arisen from the want of mutual love. If but that one virtue could be made universal, the princes loving one another would have no battlefields; the chiefs of families would attempt no usurpations; men would commit no robberies; rulers and ministers would be gracious and loyal; fathers and sons would be kind and filial; brothers would be harmonious and easily reconciled. Men in general loving one another, the strong would not make prey of the weak; the many would not plunder the few; the rich would not insult the poor; the noble would not be insolent to

the mean; and the deceitful would not impose upon the simple." There is no doubt the great man oversimplified the situation (as we all do, in our thinking and talking), but *if* universal mutual love could have been brought about, the problems would have been a long way toward solution. Among the ancient Chinese it was Mo Ti who clearly saw the need and the chiefest of all the antidotes.

For the West it was Jesus Christ who saw the need and gave the most searching of all prescriptions. He it was who declared that love was the first of all commandments, the fulfillment of all the law and the prophets. It was He who saw so plainly that men did not love one another, and who said, despite the fact that men almost can't, they must. This was the most insistent ethical demand of that great prophet and teacher. So true is this that Dr. Anderson Scott, after a thorough study of the ethical teachings of the New Testament, says in an authoritative volume on the subject that the command to love is the one command given by Jesus which He intended to apply to all men, under all circumstances, and at all times. It is His one universal and irrevocable demand. What He knew of the times in which He lived, and of the human heart itself, led Him to insist that man's most central attitude should be that of unfailing benevolence.

To detail the needs for the practice of love in our own time would be an act of supererogation. The petty egoism and slippery overreaching in personal relations all about us attest the need. The planned campaigns for advantage on every hand also declare it. The bitter and circuitous warfare, unrelenting, between parties in economics and politics, and even in religion, keeps the facts always before us. And the international and continental strifes of our day are its boldest and most brazen embodiment. If ever the men of this world needed to learn the lesson of love and to practice it, now is the time. The reasons this is so are writ large for every one who knows even a little about the human situation.

IS LOVE THE GREATEST THING?

But there are some who question whether love is the foremost of ethical demands and our greatest duty. They know why they demur at putting love first. Some have been saying all these years that not love but *justice* is the first of all ethical requirements. Rendering to every person that which is his due, in the circumstances, comes first. There are too many conflicts

of interest to trust our basic attitudes to any other test. Only justice can be firm enough and fair enough to bring us through with commendable treatment of all parties. Not left to the caprice or independent judgment of private persons, our interests can be maintained and dealt with fairly only when justice prevails and is given right of way. A few years ago, Rabbi Joseph Klausner, a learned and devout Jew, incidental to preparing and publishing a monumental history of the Jewish people, also studied the life and work of Jesus. While completing his main work, he wrote also a systematic and judicious account of the life and teachings of Jesus which he published in their native tongue, to be read by Jews. Later the book was translated into English and is generally considered one of the fine accounts. After having given a sympathetic and penetrating portrayal of the teachings of Jesus, Doctor Klausner makes the basal objection to the ethical teaching. It is too idealistic. Beautiful it is, and touching. It intrigues the heart, and the possibility of its realization would be exciting in the extreme. Yet it is not rightly centered. Love is so emphasized, in both God and man, that the more central requirement of justice is minimized or overlooked. All morality and all ethical soundness are squarely founded on justice, and if that be displaced or let go, then sound morality can not be assured. Such is the claim that not love but justice is the core of morality. To which it should be replied, that the opposition between love and justice is not so real. The issue is not fairly put. The ethical life does not require a choice of one or the other; both are necessary. We might all admit that, if a choice were required, justice should come first. But that primacy is more logical than otherwise. For the practice of love presupposes justice. Perhaps justice is the best that organized and forcible society can do; and a very important thing that is. But with justice fully and widely done, there still is abiding need for love to overflow it and to bring to pass between individuals and within our many groupings that cementing of society which justice alone can never compass. Love has always gone beyond the definable requirements of justice and has done for man what justice never does get done. Justice is indefeasible. But justice is comprehended and fulfilled in love.

That contention would be granted by many. Yet very many would say that love is not the prime thing, and can not be, because men do not *deserve* to be loved. Would to God we could down this objection with an unqualified denial! But that would deal loosely with the facts, one of the hardest

of which, for those who care and entertain hope for human kind, is the fact that everyday humanity is so ordinary. (At this point it is not necessary to overlook our own too obvious belonging to the common lot. Nobody but the blinded prig will consider it necessary to blink his own connections in this matter, or to except himself from the common herd.) Granting that man is the best that this universe has yet been able to produce, it still is disturbing to many to observe how selfish and hard and unrefined the many are. In personal contacts and observation, there is no lack of examples of the thing we mean. Everyone has contacted persons who were little and mean and boorish and hard. Some of them have been rotten in their lives, and with most of them their influence has been positively and actively degrading. However, those are the minority, albeit they are an ever-present and not a negligible minority. The insistence that the great run of men are undeserving of love has in view these great stretches of common humanity whose sole and selfish concern seems to be to get what they can, what time they can, and as much as they can, for themselves.

How often the effort to love in a simple and friendly way backfires! It would not be so bad if that were true only in some of the personal contacts we make, but it is even worse when society (as ourselves organized) undertakes to do the right things by those who are underprivileged. Out of the sense of a common humanity, we try to set up ways and means whereby the unemployed, the unfortunate, the destitute may be enabled to earn (or seem to earn) at least meager livelihood for themselves. In a big, organized, and systematic way, we undertake to "love" them as we ourselves under similar circumstances would wish to be loved. Not always, but too often, they are stupid and hard to serve. Often they are unlettered, opinionated, and headstrong. Upon receiving a little attention they become self-important, and voluble. What society wills to grant them on the basis of our common humanity, they soon get to demand as their unquestionable right. Forthwith society "owes" them not just a chance to live, but a chance to live with all that they, singly and combined, can exact. From being the limping wards of society, due to untoward circumstances which they have only partly caused, they come to think of themselves as the foremost of society's concerns. And organized under the leadership (if such it be) of some of the wilier of their own, they press upon society with demands that tend always to become insatiable and impossible. The plain truth seems to be that many of them are undeserving, and too often ungrate-

ful. Their main claims to consideration and help are that they are human, and they are here. But if we waited to love them until most of them "deserved" it, the help would come too late.

When the objections we have given to the command of love are added to another plaint often felt, if not expressed, the case is about complete. Even if love were the foremost thing, and if the majority deserved or appreciated it, still it is *not practicable*. It is just not human to love everybody, not even any considerable number, and least of all those with whom we make no personal contacts. Besides, our devotion to those nearest to us is a selfish devotion, and is hardly love at all. That kind of thing only extends our own ego and is really self-love more than anything else. Our mates, our children, our good friends, they are our assets, and we cherish them for our own sake more than for themselves. Beyond such limits, our love is only what organized society demands of us as our share in the communal life. As to any love for those far away in space, or in time, that is just sentimentalism. Most all talk about love is idealistic and sentimental. And the whole thing is impracticable. To this objection two main things may be said. In the first place, it misunderstands the true nature of brotherly (or Christian) love. Of that we shall say more presently. On the other hand, nothing else than true love has yet done for mankind what is demanded. If life for the many is to continue and be tolerable, and if society and civilization are to endure, more must be done than has so far been largely assured. Certainly selfishness and competition, and force, have been repeatedly running us amuck. In those areas of life, domestically and internationally, where considerable reason and an approach to practical love have prevailed, man has prospered. Nothing else has served to do it. After all, may we not learn that only love is good enough and big enough to save the situation? Instead of branding the call for it as visionary and impracticable, it might better be embraced and given every chance to prove itself, if perchance therein may lie the grandest of all cures for a desperately sick world.

THE MEANINGS OF LOVE

Enough has been said to make it clear that love may have several meanings. Held ever before us in fiction, in the pictures and drama, and in everyday life, as something romantic, love has a popular connotation of sentimentalism. Rooted in sex, and played up as the main concern of life

(outside the field of business), it is treated as something essentially emotional. Everybody is taken with it. The birthright of every female is to experience it, once or frequently, and to be pursued until she gets her man. Every male struggles with its aches and pains until he is mated, and properly domesticated. The minority which does not come through to these normal ends lives out its days with the nagging conviction that it has been cheated out of life's richest birthright. Such is the sentimental romanticism all about us in these sex-conscious times.

Not that all this has no place. But it is love in its lowest terms. For a long while some have said that morality had its first beginnings with the devotion of prehuman mothers to the care and welfare of their offspring. Then it was that living beings began to pass over from absorption in the struggle for themselves to sharing the struggle for the life of others. Whenever and wherever that took place, it was a most crucial development for all that came after. And down to our day, the growth of morality has been the application to expanding circles, of the care and sharing there begun. From the sex-impelled romanticism above described naturally there has come the founding of the family and all it means. From romantic love there has grown parental love; and from that has budded filial love. The protective impulse, also akin to this, has functioned as tender love toward others not immediately involved in the family circle. And thus has love come to have deep and broad meanings within the first and most central of all the face-to-face groups we humans experience.

Beyond this lie the circles of neighborhood and friendship. In these areas our contacts with others are firsthand and rather frequent. They know us, and we know them. Our paths cross in various ways, and we know one another in action and at ease. Our interests vary, and our personalities and temperaments differ. But more often than not, all these supplement rather than conflict with one another. And all of us get farther by helping than we would by hindering each other. Besides, most of our problems and worries are more alike than different. So the neighborhood activities go along by the day and week; we know and are known; and we stand better together than apart. In friendships outside the neighborhood there is more of spontaneity and free choice. Likes and dislikes function more freely. Affinities of one sort and another are discovered and cherished. Contacts which come naturally are supplemented by those cultivated in the many ways known to friends. We keep our touches and feelings alive by seeing or

writing, or in other repetitive ways. And love flourishes in this natural environment.

Over and above sex love, which is basal, biological, emotional, and romantic, we have been portraying personal love only. Perhaps Nicolai Hartmann in his great discussion of Ethics has given the best distinction between the kinds of love. *Personal love* is that which we have described. In it, primary contacts and emotional coloration are prominent. Its sentiment is most often genuine, but it lives on firsthand relations and has always a substantial proportion of self-interest involved. Beyond this, however, and better (from the larger view), is what should be called *brotherly love*. What we have been speaking of corresponds more nearly to what the Greeks meant by *philia*. But brotherly love accords with what the ancients meant by *agape*. That is a deeper, more studied, more resolute devotion to the objects of its interest. It may or may not carry within it a considerable lode of emotion. It does embody more use of imagination and of the reason. But most of all, it is an attitude of will, and is sustained by volition, supported by knowledge of circumstances and relations as they exist. The romantic element is largely aside, and the emotional and sentimental aspects are minimized. This is brotherly love, the love of humanity, the love of fellow man, and is love in the truly Christian sense. This was what Christ meant when he said that love fulfilled the law and was the first duty of every right-minded person. A third kind of love might be called the *love of the remote*, and applies to love when manifested toward those who are greatly distant from us either in space or in time. Those peoples on the other side of the earth with whom we have no conscious concern, and those yet unborn, are the chief objects of this love of the remote. In it there is practically nothing that could be called personal love; and it represents an attenuated and rationalized form of brotherly or humane love. Its obligations are binding on us, but are less urgent and less demanding than the other kinds of love.

Therefore, when we talk knowingly about the command to love, we are mostly thinking of brotherly, humane, or Christian love. We are not primarily trying to whip up in ourselves and others an artificial, superficial, or even a hearty personal love toward persons and groups where it does not naturally belong or grow. Sex love comes to normal persons in its time and place. Personal love also does. Its values which are real are taken up into and are in some part sublimated by brotherly love, but it is

the latter which means most in the great society. An attitude favorable to personal love can be assumed somewhat consciously by most of us (and it should be our sustained attitude in personal relations), but it is brotherly or Christian love which embraces justice and transcends it, and which reaches out beyond the immediate and the directly related toward the humane and intelligent behavior that is necessary if mankind is to live peaceably and to prosper in its multiplying secondary contacts and relationships.

Over and above these kinds of love there is an emergency manifestation which tends to bring the emotional accompaniments of personal love forward into the fields ordinarily served only by brotherly love. There is a fighting spirit which usually prevails only in fighting times. In this unusual manifestation of love it is as if the fighting spirit could be brought over into less exciting days and made to flourish there. It depends on crisis psychology, and it has yet to be shown how it can be sustained without running off into conflict and ultimately doing more harm than good. Anyway, it is a possibility which deserves to be thought about. It has been vividly expressed in verse by Ella W. Wilcox in these lines:

"GOD, what a world, if men in street and mart,
Felt that same kinship of the human heart,
Which makes them, in the face of fire and flood,
Rise to the meaning of True Brotherhood!"

HOW LOVE WOULD WORK

Admittedly, love as an ideal is beautiful. And granted that we are obligated to assume and maintain the attitude and practice of brotherly, humane love as our most central devotion, what is to be done? How can it be implemented? How would it work? What does its practice involve?

Its essentials can be foreseen. Its several applications are more circumstantial and changing, and will require further discussion. What will be required of us if this substantial kind of love is to thrive among us and take effect, can be stated. Since its emotional and romantic aspects are greatly reduced, if not omitted, they can be fairly easily managed. Brotherly love will thus not require (though it would use) personal contacts and vivid emotional concern for the objects of its interest. If present, they might help to motivate one's concern but they are not basically necessary. However, as is not true in personal love, the intellectual element is more required. In personal love, our senses and our sympathy keep us alive to the existence

and the needs of the beloved. The objects of brotherly love may not be within personal reach, and therefore may not be kept real to us by our several senses. Their existence and their needs then must be made real to us by the use of our imagination, our reason. We must have information, knowledge, and through reason and imagination we must see things as they are. Perhaps nothing in all morality is more basic than thoughtfulness, the capacity and the habit of "putting ourselves in their place." And this requires, inevitably demands, both knowledge and imagination, informed and sympathetic imagination. We must see the situation, and see it with the facts and in proportion (which again reminds us that the practice of love is not easy!).

Beyond the seeing of things as they are and of others in their real place and circumstances, love requires our self-identification with them. The very essence of love is self-giving. Brotherly love would mean intelligent and sustained self-giving. It would mean substantial and significant self-giving, and usually with no prospect of personal advantage or ensuing return. Such love may overleap all boundaries except those set by the limits of mentality itself. Any persons or groups whose situations we can envisage, we can love. We can love them with all our mind and strength, and with as much of our heart as comes along. We are thus motivated not so much by their desert or gratitude, but mostly by their humanity and their human needs, and by the fact that we are their knowing fellow-travelers along the way. In their need is our obligation. This kind of love may not rest in sentiment, nor stop short of *doing* something. Sympathetic imagination must lead the way to service. And along the way of service will arise occasions for sacrifice. In whatever circle of relationship, these are the basal necessities if brotherly love is to prevail. In different circles it will work out differently.

For the majority of us there are at least five circles of relationship within which we shall live, more or less, and the practice of love, for us, must come within these relations. We have already said something of what love would be like in the circle of family and the kinship group. Much like that also would be its workings in the circles of neighborhood and friendship. Love will most often have the nature and tone of personal love, in those relations. But brotherly love in those circles takes up into itself the personal love, giving it more body and meaning, and extending it in ways that a narrower love might not encompass. So there need be no quarrel, nor confusion in thought, regarding love in those more primary

relationships. It will come easier and be more impressive, and its emotional lights and shadows will make it seem to be more real than that brotherly love which involves us less on the emotional side. But this has taken account of two only of the main circles of living for us—the family relations, and those of neighborhood and friendship. Most of us will also live as employees, and that relation will make demands on us for the practice of love. A considerable number of us also will serve as employers, in one way and another; and the practice of love in that relation is important. Beyond this also, for us all, will come the circle of citizenship, both national and international, and the ethical claims of those relations must be faced. Perhaps these are the main circles within which we are obligated to live by the spirit of love, in practice and in our time.

IN BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT

One of the most meaningful big facts is that the very large majority of us now earn our livelihood by working in the employ of others. This is one of those crucial, pivotal facts which has not yet received its due attention in our time. For the business of living, it is most significant. It has implications for our independence, and for our vital and moral economies, far beyond anything that has yet been clearly seen by most of us. Among those of us who are gainfully employed (leaving those who work at farming out of the account), about eighty per cent now earn their living by working for wages, salaries, and fees. When the total picture is seen, only about five per cent of us are independent enterprisers, apart from the farming folk (and with all the facts in mind one can fairly contend that most of them are not “independent” in any far-reaching way). This really means that more than nine out of ten of us will live by working *as employees* for someone else, an individual or some group, and in most instances we shall be working for some organized group. How then are we to practice brotherly love in such relations? We can only indicate some of the main lines. Someone has said that love becomes loyalty when it is directed toward a group. And loyalty may well be the first way we shall show our love toward the group or organization for which we work. If we live by them then we should be loyal to them. Both reason and fairness dictate this. And as brotherly love does not depend on emotional features of the situation, this loyalty will be possible. It does not require us to blink at things which we honestly think should be different; but there should be no question as to our basic loyalty

to the group by which we live. Nothing also can be a substitute for good service on our part. If plain honesty calls for that, then love will make us want to do even better. For the doing of our honest part in the right spirit and the best way there is no alternative, if we mean to love as we would be loved (practically, not sentimentally). This will mean co-operation by us, and in good spirit. As already said, this does not mean that we may not wish to have some things different from what they are. We need not be blinded to unwise policies or unfair practices, if they exist. Nor does it mean that we (as employees organized) may not make demands upon our employers. But it will mean that those demands will be made with all pertinent facts at hand and with the entire situation in mind. It will face and measure all aspects of the situation, and will ask only for what might reasonably be granted after full and impartial consideration by outside and disinterested parties. In the rough-and-tumble world as it is, the procedure may not be as orderly and reasonable as this sounds, but the heart of it is here, and the practice of love does not require that the employee shall efface himself or forego his rightful demands. It does expect that those demands shall be within reason and that they shall be sought after in as orderly and undestructive a way as circumstances allow. Still other ways can be thought of for the practice of love in the employee relationship.

A special aspect of the service of others for a fee or salary is presented by the widespread existence today of thoroughgoing *specialization*. And the bedrock principle here is that any person (or organization) rendering highly specialized service, for the purpose of that service and during its time, shall put himself in the place of the person requiring the service and shall do for him, if possible, the very kind of service he would do for himself if he were able. It is a special case of the general principle that the practice of love requires self-identification with the object of its interest. On a very practical level, for example, an owner presents his automobile at the shop of an expert mechanic. If the mechanic is to practice love in this relation, he will (within the limits of possibility and sound sense) identify his specialized self with the customer's need and will serve him accordingly. In a similar way, a customer may present himself to his haberdasher for the purchase of a suit of clothes. The seller should know much more about clothes (quality, durability, style, price) than the buyer. For the time of that transaction the dealer, as a specialist, should put his special knowledge entirely at the disposal of his client. That would be love, and it is not too

much to ask. Even more is this true when applied to the services rendered by the teacher, the lawyer, and the doctor. With them also there is the stronger requirement of love that they shall ceaselessly strive to keep themselves abreast of the learning and skill needful to their art. Another principle especially applying to several of the professions is that fees must be kept secondary to the rendering of the services where needed. The needs of individuals and of society come before the claim to repayment, although that is necessary and may not be ignored. So much of the value of services in professional relations depends on psychic and social factors that these must not be overlooked or neglected by practitioners. Certainly not, if love is to be striven for. These are some of the ways love would work in specialized relations.

For one *as an employer*, the practice of love would take several main forms. In this money economy of ours, it would mean pay that is fair. Many factors would enter into the determination of what that fair wage could (and should) be, but it would not be mechanically determined, nor would it be the niggardly rate made possible by the market or some peculiar conditions which hampered the claims of labor at the moment. So also would brotherly love require the providing of good conditions under which to labor, and the demanding of hours that are reasonable. There would also be plenty of reason for "human" treatment of all concerned. There should be some provision for sharing by the employees in the business, in ways that would make them participators in its prosperity, and also in those phases of its management in which their interest and judgment might make them actively concerned. Above all, love in business would require that employers "behave like human beings" and that they adopt attitudes and procedures which, as far as possible, enable the workers to become real participants in the enterprise, conscious of their place and worth, and able to experience some rewarding self-realization in their lives. This has been done in some businesses, and its possibilities are just beginning to be seen by those who have discerning eyes. The future will have much more of it.

In the field of *citizenship* love would seem to require several things. Perhaps first of all would be the acceptance not only of its privileges but also of its obligations. In these days many persons seem alert to claim the advantages citizenship can give, but not so many are equally alert to measure up to the rightful requirements of the State. The best service many

persons could give to their society just now would be to moderate their unmitigated partisanship, whether it be political or economic or social. Partisan lines are too rigid and self-conscious for the good health of our citizenship. A right love for the country would bring many of us to seek and to have much more and better information about public affairs and major issues than we have at present. Some of us would be brought around to the duty of office-seeking and public service, and many would attend more faithfully and intelligently to voting. Unremitting vigilance to assure honesty by our public officials, little and big, would be one lasting field for practical love. Compromise in a society as complex as ours is necessary; love would see that it comes only when necessary and always at the highest levels possible. And in a world where more and more services are demanded and where everything costs, love might work to see that only the services and improvements are undertaken which benefit the real majority, and that the tolls taken for their maintenance do really go toward those ends.

Two further considerations, both greatly important, can only be mentioned. One of the prime facts about the practice of love in our time is that it must be *organized*. Outside of rather simple personal relationships, guerrilla attacks on the situations which love is needed to meet just do not work. The practice of charity must be done mainly in organized and systematic ways. The defense of our rights, civil and other, must be an organized defense. The meeting of needs in relief and toward security can be done in even a partial way only by organized effort. Only by a concerted and sustained drive can the fight for justice and peace even begin to succeed. And so it is, along all lines. Our love will be of little effect unless it is organized and long sustained.

Of course, a perfect love would go far beyond most of the ways here detailed. And it would ideally include personal love, brotherly love, and the love of the remote as well. It would rest solidly on deep humanity and the love of one's fellows the earth around. But there is reason to believe that such efficient and fruitful love is not widely enough understood; nor adequately motivated by reason and goodwill alone. Humanness and sweet reasonableness can do much, but they may not carry us all the way. Brotherly love, practicable and Christian, requires the dynamic of living *religion*.

The Unfailing Light

CLARENCE W. KEMPER

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD lad watched an approaching storm and exclaimed, "See! The sky is falling down." The writer of this scripture was in a storm. His eye swept along the long past, glanced the contemporary scene, faced the future utterly unafraid. He lifted his torch. He averred: "The light is still shining in the darkness, for the darkness has never put it out"—John 1. 5 (American).

It was a great word for a dark hour. That was a hard pagan world to which came our holy faith. Caesar worship was there. The might and power of Rome was everywhere. Her legions marched to and fro across the world, undisputed in their sway. True, the zealous Hebrews, with their long and sturdy traditions, made for a flare-up now and then, but were soon ground under the heel of Roman might. Not long since the Galilean prophet had awakened new hopes and the zealots were ready to follow Him. Indeed, they offered to make Him king, but He would have none of it. And, anyhow, He had come to an inglorious death and His friends and followers were scattered.

I. A BLACKOUT WORLD

Dr. Charles Gilkey tells us that after twenty-two days of blackout experience in London and other cities of the British Isles last summer, the blazing lights of New York City seemed the most significant thing. He had felt the sheer power and pall of utter darkness, in which people feel their way about the streets, while womenfolk busy themselves with sewing heavy cloth coverings for every window. Men go about the streets smoking in self-defense, thus making their fellow travelers aware of their whereabouts. So impressed are our friends caught in this darkness that they breathe an instinctive prayer, "God grant that our street lights and neon signs may never go out."

Lord Grey remarked twenty-six years ago, as the World War was declared, looking out over the streets of London as daylight came and the

lights were being turned off: "The lamps are going out all over Europe and we shall not see them again in our lifetime." Indeed, our generation seems to be characterized by falling skies and lamps that are going out. The foolish virgins whose drowsiness at the midnight hour could not easily be overcome, cried out in plaintive and pathetic tones as though to picture our day: "Our lamps are gone out!"

II. LIGHTS ARE GOING OUT

Our false optimisms of a generation ago are now sufficiently dispelled, and disillusionment has bitten into us with such painful realism that we know "men love darkness rather than light." There is a vivid portrayal of our life in Kipling's *Second Jungle Book* in the chapter entitled, "Letting in the Jungle." It is ominous, dark and foreboding. He paints the picture of an Indian village which the wild animals of the jungle had plotted to destroy. The elephants, lions and wild boars invaded the settlement, destroying crops and buildings, while the people fled before them. Where once were living souls going about the normal interests of life, there now was silence save as broken by wild animals that had taken possession. Dangers engulf us when the lights go out.

Indeed, it may almost be said that the whole Bible is a long story told in many forms, how God's garden of light is forever struggling against the jungle darkness of sin and shame. "An enemy hath been here and done this!" cries the gardener when he finds the tares in the wheat.

See a band of slave peoples, serving their masters while their own lives were cramped, cabined and confined, until one day one of their own number, who had dwelt long with his dreams and in desert silence, heard the voice of gentle stillness and came forward to say four words: "Let my people go!"

Stand with the prophets of the eighth century before Christ. They were realists of the first rank. They had long, long thoughts and brooded deeply over the enemies of the race. They knew their own beloved little land, bordered by the sea, had been the battle grounds for avaricious leaders of armies who went out in marauding invasions against helpless peoples whether they had any quarrel with them or not. Seeing this monster forever poised to fall upon his prey, the prophets dreamed a dream which will not die. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares," said they, "and their spears into pruning hooks." Darkness everywhere they saw, but dauntless

faith saw a ray of light penetrating it, forecasting a day—some far-off day in the purposes of God—when men shall make war no more.

Or the psalmist who knew well that life is a running battle between darkness and light, sings, "I call to remembrance my song in the night." Darkness was engulfing me, but God put a song into my heart and light came to me. 'Tis the half-blind Matheson, doomed to go in darkness all his days, who sings for all the "pilgrims of the night," "O love that wilt not let me go." The prison walls cast dark shadows over Paul and Silas, but in the darkest hours of midnight they pray and sing to their God.

Helen Keller wrote to Dr. Francis Stifler recently, saying: "The Bible stands up there now in a case beside the big window where the sun comes flooding in when it shines, so I shall have both the beams warm on my head, and, so to speak, the Word—the Light of men—clasped in my hand. These days my soul is almost stretched apart with sorrow on account of the deaf-blindness which afflicts such a large part of mankind." Indeed, lights are going out!

III. THE ENGULFING DARKNESS

Let us face the darkness enveloping our modern habitations which our spiritual ancestors have achieved through tears and blood. "Somber Shadows," indeed!

1. *The Darkness of Disillusionment*

Yesterday we thought we were going up "willy nilly" but we had not arrived. Progress was our watchword, but what kind of progress was this? Democracy was to be universal but we got dictators. "The evangelization of the world in this generation" was heard on every college campus in America thirty years ago, while today the great bodies of the Christian Church close up mission stations in needy areas and the jungles creep in again. 'Tis a long war in which we are enlisted. The forces of evil are vigorous and refuse to be routed without resistance.

The sheer, stark brutal fact of sin in the life of man is more evident today than ever before in our lifetime. Sin makes for underprivilege for the masses; it takes food and clothing from little children; it puts fear and heartbreak into noble parents; it sets race against race; it pits nation against nation, teaching the diabolical philosophy of superior peoples; it corners trade and establishes blockades against helpless peoples.

2. *The Darkness of Our Thing-Centered Civilization*

Such an order of life does violence to what Jesus thought most worthwhile. He put God and human personality at the center, exactly the opposite of our thing-centered civilization. Georgia Harkness has reminded us that "our economic system, centered in the amassing of profits for private gain, thwarts spiritual values by producing exploitation and arrogance on one side of the chasm, bitterness and dull misery on the other." Again, John C. Bennett gives a solemn reminder to every churchman, saying that "our present economic order grew up when the Church was asleep." Still another remarks that "the economic and political orders became lost provinces as far as the Church was concerned in the centuries between the Protestant Reformation and the very recent past." Something is wrong with our civilization when in the year of apparent prosperity, 1929, one tenth of 1 per cent of the population of the United States had an income equal to that of 41 per cent of the population. When things are in the saddle like that one wonders as to the tomorrows of vast millions of children whom Jesus "put in the midst." Out of the tangle of things our hearts cry in anxious entreaty:

"O young and fearless Prophet, we need Thy presence here,
Amid our pride and glory to see Thy face appear;
Once more to hear Thy challenge above our noisy day,
Again to lead us forward along God's holy way."

(S. RALPH HARLOW.)

3. *The Darkness of the Forces of Evil*

We have talked humorously about "Jumboism" and the worship of bigness. But it is terribly dangerous. We have bigness in education, social organization and welfare; bigness in business, in national life, and even organized religion. Today exaggerated nationalism makes every small nation on the earth to stand in imminent danger of invasion if not even extinction. The totalitarian State leaves no place for the free spirit of man. Exaggerated nationalism, reinforced by fanatical emphasis upon race, constitutes a terribly dark jungle resisting the light of day. It should be clear now and finally that trust in bigness will avail us nothing. As we speak, eighty-ton tanks mow down armies like so much tinder. They will be superseded by one hundred-ton tanks, and they in turn by unlimited giants of death. This way leads to the suicide of the race.

John C. Bennett paints a vivid picture of our present darkness, saying,

"Not only must the Church as an institution go underground in this modern type of dictatorship, but the individual Christian also must expect to lose his freedom. His children will be molded by the State. Christian family life will be broken up by the fact that children indoctrinated by the State will wittingly or unwittingly become informers against their parents. Modern secularism has destroyed the theocratic basis of human freedom. Modern technology has made the tyranny so efficient that there is in it no place for that unintended freedom that has often made tyrannies endurable in the past. Modern dictatorship has contrived to make many of its victims inwardly acquiescent if not happy in their slavery."

O America, British Empire, Germany, Russia and all others who exult in bigness and greatness, beware lest it lead you and others down to death! What matters bigness while millions cry for bread, go tattered in rags while the gates of opportunity are closed against the hopes and dreams of the most significant army in the world—youth?

It is a dark picture. We would have it otherwise. We shrink from this as from a plague. But we would be realists. We would live in no fool's paradise. And the plain truth is, ours today is a very dark world. Our boasted modern civilization has been invaded by enemy forces from the jungle of sin. Near Estes Park, Colorado, there is a giant tree, dead now after it had resisted all the storms of the mountains for 500 years. The cause!—a tiny beetle which got under the bark and sealed its doom. This hour is dark because "we have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

"We have been guilty of selfishness and strife when we should have learned to build in brotherhood.

We have been content that we ourselves should prosper though many might be poor,

That a few should feast while multitudes were famishing both in body and in soul." (From a Litany of Penitence.)

IV. THE UNFAILING LIGHT

"The light is still shining in the darkness, for the darkness has never put it out." And we make bold to say, it never will. Wherein rests this faith? On what grounds?

1. *The Historical Reality*

What of Abraham's faith concerning a great company of the faithful

when slavery had overtaken them in the land of the Pharaohs? What of Solomon's Temple and all the holy associations of 2,500 years ago, when dejected captives sat by the riverside in a strange land, while their throats choked with emotion too deep for songs, and harps were mute? What of the Hebrews and early Christians of the first century when Rome captured and sacked Jerusalem and persecution drove the Church under ground? What of the Dark Ages in Europe when it seemed that for centuries all the lights had gone out? This is a time to review history. The Philistines are not the permanent inhabitants in the kingdom of God. Jesus avowed that the meek are the final inheritors and that peacemakers are the sons of God. Like the man of old we would assert: "God forbid it me that I should give away the inheritance of my fathers." "The Egyptians are men and not gods; and their horses are flesh and not spirit." "The darkness has never put it out."

2. *The Light of Religion*

The light of religion is yet with us, enabling us "to see life steadily and see it whole." It does that for us as nothing else can. The fable of the blind men reporting on their several appraisals of the elephant is much like our constricted philosophies for a life too big and complicated for us. Clement of Alexandria in the second century described how the Christians of his day interpreted life in terms of religion: "Holding festival, then, in our whole life, persuaded that God is altogether on every side present, we cultivate our fields, praising; we sail the sea, hymning; in all the rest of our conversation we conduct ourselves according to rule."

Georgia Harkness gives us a vivid reminder. "Religion," says she, "paradoxically does two things at once: it lifts one out of himself, and it reinforces one in himself." Long before, Paul had stated it, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." In periods of shallow optimism we feel we can go on without religion, but in moments of serious realism it comes up to our doors. Dean Willard L. Sperry of Harvard Divinity School says, "In obedience to some deep unreasoning prompting, men seek churches when life is most real." And Municipal Judge Phillip B. Gilliam, of Denver, recently remarked: "If I've learned anything on this job, I guess it is the fact that people, and young people particularly, need the churches. I guess you wouldn't call me over-religious, but I have just about decided nothing can be done for a person unless he clings to a church."

In the dark days of the depression a certain man remarked that his faith had gone. Then referring to a friend he said, "I'd give anything to have a faith in God like that." His wise pastor reminded him of the painstaking practice of the presence of God on the part of the other man's whole family, adding, "That is what they give to come upon their understanding and conception of God." Joy Homer tells of a village through which the Chinese fled. Finding in it such vital Christian living, the refugees put a plaque over the village gateway: "Our deep gratitude to the families of this place who, through the thing inside of them called Christianity, have done more to nurse our sick and our wounded and to help our troubled people than any group we know." "The darkness has never put it out."

3. *Again, This Is God's World*

How revealing this light! He has not yet abdicated. He has often had to wait. He has never been in a hurry. He has lived through many a storm. Often He "makes the wrath of man to praise Him." When men have all but despaired some prophet has reminded them, "standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

"Who then made all this?" is a question at life's gateway. The psalmist in the desert stillness brooded long and concluded that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." 'Tis God, not man, who creates the cosmic order in which our existence is possible. He gave it orderliness with precision. It is not thinkable that disorder, the slovenly earthly housekeeping of our morally unkempt human family made in His image, fratricidal strife which often breaks into destructive war, are in keeping with the will and purposes of the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

Love must have been in His heart to provide these rich, almost inexhaustible natural resources. What tragedy and heartbreak must be His as He sees His creatures fight over them like dogs over a bone! Surely, He must have meant them for such common blessing among men as to give brotherhood, creating a world family.

Moreover, we are made aware that this universe in which we live is a moral order, held by certain moral laws, and guided on to some great moral and spiritual ends. In the long run this is a good world for good men and a bad world for bad men. Dictators who crush the free spirit of man, strut out their little day, and sooner or later are hurried into oblivion. Exploiters

of the earth once had more freedom than they have today. Their deeds catch up with them sooner in the modern tempo. Increasingly moral indignation burns against them. So-called benefactors of yesterday are seen in the white light of having been exploiters of the resources a good God must have meant for the benefit of all His creatures. Imperialism is increasingly under the shadow because we know more of God. It will be difficult business tomorrow. "No man is good enough to keep another in slavery," said Lincoln. Tomorrow it will likely be accepted in social, racial, national, international and economic life.

History shouts from the housetops: "No society that countenances greed, injustice, violence and cruelty can permanently endure." Dr. Ernest F. Tittle reminds us: "It looks as if God were saying to our generation, you had better mend your ways; you had better build a co-operative society in which as individuals and as nations you can work together for the common good of all." "The darkness has never put it out."

4. *Human Lives Are the Objects of God's Concern*

What illumination! The judgment of our civilization is in this: "How do you treat man?" "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" How much better than armies and navies and flying armadas? How much better than skyscrapers, mass-production assembly plants and weaving looms? They must all be for him, never against him.

He is made "in the image of God." He is endowed with strange contradictions. "O, wretched man that I am," exclaimed Saint Paul. We are the "house divided against itself." Man is capable of most terrible cruelties and some of his deeds make us blush to think of him as one of our kind. At the same time he is capable of aspirations that reach up to God, responsibilities that take the world of men upon his heart, and dedication to high endeavors capturing our admiration. In league with God men find a plus for their powers.

Once he is captured by the spirit and will of God, his powers for good seem almost unlimited. He rises to full stature in a Paul, a Luther, a Wesley, a Livingstone, a Carey, a Judson, a Kagawa and a Schweitzer. What wonder we turn to the high texts: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son," "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and "Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he is made manifest, we shall be like

him, for we shall see him as he is." "When Moses was grown up . . . he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens." "The darkness has never put it out." Hear John Haynes Holmes:

"I hear My people crying
In cot and mine and slum;
No field or mart is silent,
No city street is dumb.
I see My people falling
In darkness and despair.
Whom shall I send to shatter
The fetters which they bear?

We heed, O Lord, Thy summons,
And answer: Here are we!
Send us upon Thine errand.
Let us Thy servants be.
Our strength is dust and ashes,
Our years a passing hour;
But Thou canst use our weakness
To magnify Thy power."

5. *Jesus Christ the Light of the World*

The ground of our faith in the last analysis is that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, radiant and unfailing. He walked through the furnace of temptation, heated three times, emerging with a glowing sense of mission:

"I have come to throw fire on the earth.
Would it were kindled already!
I have a baptism to undergo.
How I am distressed till it is all over!"
(MOFFATT.)

He who "knew what was in man," qualifying him to be critical and firm, was so kind and tender that "the common people heard him gladly." What they felt about Him has been vindicated by His followers of the centuries. One says: "Jesus Christ whose kingdom shall have no end." The Te Deum sings: "Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." The Scripture has it: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, yea, and forever." Long centuries later a Livingstone traveling 30,000 miles through dark Africa sings as he goes: "Jesus, the very thought of Thee with sweetness fills the breast; but sweeter far Thy face to see, and in Thy presence rest." Most appropriate was it that they sang this hymn when

his worn-out body was laid to rest in Westminster. His "light is still shining in the darkness."

Jesus is our *contemporary*. He is more alive and up-to-date, and has more to say than any teacher in our world today. He is at once timely and timeless. His words are living, throbbing, life-giving, shot through with eternal purposes. Indeed, contemporary supreme! "He that findeth his life shall lose it." "Whoever would be great must serve." What words to write over an acquisitive society! He gives us the clues here and now. "Blessed are the peacemakers," and our vast world needs this today as no previous generation! "He is the same yesterday and today." "He went to him and bound up his wounds," and behold, the good Samaritan becomes the symbol of charity and social amelioration forever! "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbor as thyself," and we have the aspirations that reach to the highest, and the motivations giving outreach to the last person wherever man is found.

One who learned in His school asked: "Who is hurt and I am not hurt?" "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." So spoke Eugene V. Debs, who "had taken it upon himself." The poet sensed it in the immortal words:

"I knew that Christ had given me birth,
To brother all the souls of earth."

"The soul of Jesus is restless today;
Christ is tramping through the spirit-world,
Compassion in his heart for the fainting millions;

He trudges through China, through Japan,
Through Russia, through Finland, through Poland,
Through Austria, through Bohemia and Slovakia,
Through Germany, Italy, Ethiopia, Spain,
Through England and France,
Through the Scandinavian peoples, through Holland and Belgium;
He trudges from one end to the other of America;
Patiently he pleads with the Church,
Tenderly he woos her.

The wounds of his body are bleeding afresh
For the sorrows of his shepherdless people.

The soul of Jesus is restless today,
But eternally undismayed."

(CYRUS B. MITCHELL.)

Jesus Christ is *relevant*. He must never be treated otherwise. The Church in Russia tried that and behold the godless State! Nothing is more alarming than that the Master whom the common people heard with gladness, is too often represented by a Church from which they have gone. A great ecclesiastic is reported to have remarked that "the tragedy of this generation is that the Church has lost the working man."

How vividly it is stated by Kenneth W. Porter in biting sarcasm:

"The vestments in our church, they say,
Are rich with dyes and stiff with gold;
A thousand miners' kids today
Hide in their shanties from the cold.

The chalice—gift of loving pride—
The gems blaze as you lift it up;
A thousand babies, solemn eyed,
Clink spoons within an empty cup."

We are talking about a revival. God speed that awakening! But no revival will be worth the effort today that is not relevant to all of life. There are great questions that have come up to our doors today and they refuse to go unanswered. Among them we may include such as these: Shall we use the methods of good will or force? Shall we confine the privileges of our society to a few or make them available to all? Shall we assume that men are capable of using responsibility and privilege well, or shall we hold them in bondage, fearing what they will do with freedom? Shall we be content to enjoy the blessings of material comfort, mental culture or spiritual emancipation while they are denied to others? Is our religion related to the fact that millions of our American citizens live in habitations not befitting animal life? "Is it nothing to you" who bear the name of the kindly Jesus that sharecroppers in our good land have no abiding place while their pinched children are starved in body, mind and spirit? "Is it nothing to you" that freedom of conscience and religion, for which our adventurous ancestors gave their full devotion, is being denied across the earth today?

God speed the day of a revival of vital religion which will go to the very roots of all the life of all the people, cleansing our souls, awakening our insights, purging our motives, and dedicating our abilities to the high ends of the common weal of the common man. Then will men say, "What shall we do?"

It was said of that rugged soul, John the Baptist, "He was the lamp that burneth and shineth." The psalmist stated it, "They looked unto Him and were radiant." Out from the word in Leviticus it comes, "Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually: it shall not go out." "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Light of the world, illumine
This darkened earth of Thine,
Till everything that's human
Be filled with the divine;
Till every tongue and nation,
From sin's dominion free,
Rise in the new creation
Which springs from love and Thee."
(JOHN S. B. MONSELL.)

"The light is still shining in the darkness, for the darkness has never put it out."

Central Altar or Central Pulpit?

ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD

“WE DO not question the central place of the altar in a Catholic church. We have a right to question the implications of a similar piece of furniture, similarly placed, in a church which is frankly nonsacramentarian.” These words from Dean Willard L. Sperry,¹ of the Harvard Divinity School, suggest that there are two sorts of churches, and two theories about public worship. In fact, there are many sorts of churches, and many theories about public worship. But for convenience we may think in terms of these two contrasting types.

According to the Catholic tradition the central place in the sanctuary belongs to the altar. In the present article the word altar may at times mean little more than the communion table. According to what we may call the Word of God tradition the central place belongs to the pulpit. That in turn symbolizes the central importance of the Scriptures. Through the Bible God reveals Himself in the face of Jesus Christ. In its own distinctive fashion each of these traditions is worthy.

The present thesis is that in the Christian churches today there should be both a place and a welcome for these two ways of worship, and that every parish church ought to embody one ideal or the other. In view of the fact that of late the trend in church architecture, as well as the trend in the better books about public worship,² has been largely toward the central altar, the practical purpose now is to plead for the possibility of worshipping God today in a sanctuary which has a central pulpit.

Let us think briefly about the case for the central altar. It tends to exalt the church, rather than the minister; and to exalt public worship as a whole, rather than the sermon. So does the central altar tend to increase the emphasis on the use of the fine arts in worship. For example, think about the present revival of Gothic church architecture, and the increased attention everywhere to the music of the church. In fact, there is at present a sort of liturgical renaissance.

Strange to tell, the presence of the central altar need not lead to a

¹ *Reality in Worship*, p. 213.

² E.g., *Art and Religion*, and *Modern Worship*, both by V. O. Vogt.

neglect of preaching. In the entire history of the Church there have been no more eloquent and moving preachers than Bossuet, Boudaloue, and Massillon, each of whom proclaimed the Word of God in a French sanctuary with a central altar. In more recent times the same has been true of Frederick W. Robertson, Canon H. P. Liddon, and Phillips Brooks, not to speak of men now living, such as Father Fulton J. Sheen.

On the other hand, it would be easy to overstate the relative importance of the altar in some well-known sanctuaries today. Who that visits Riverside Church and listens to Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick comes away with a clear impression of the central altar? The same is true at the Gothic Chapel of Chicago University when Dean Charles W. Gilkey is the preacher, or at Princeton University Chapel when Dean Robert R. Wicks occupies the lofty pulpit. In any of these places one can listen to strong speaking from the pulpit and to rare music from the choir. At Princeton one is almost sure to carry away a clear impression of the east window.

In any such place of worship, however, the table which nestles beneath the east window is likely to nestle there unseen. It is almost never used for a sacramental purpose. It receives no mention in the worship week after week. It sometimes seems to be artistic and perhaps ornamental, rather than vital and dominant. As a devout Presbyterian woman exclaimed when she first visited the Chapel at Chicago University: "Oh, but it is so empty! There is no altar!" Of course a scoffer would say that Gothic architecture calls for Gothic religion. But here at the University Chapel there is a real altar in a recess at the side.

Equally satisfying architecturally, though in a different fashion, is the modest Miller Chapel at Princeton Seminary. Here too is a central communion table and a side pulpit. The communion table is used for sacramental purposes five or six times in the year, whereas the pulpit is used for preaching many times a week. Among all the friends who come in to enjoy the quiet beauty of this sanctuary, more than few mention the pulpit, which is a memorial gift, but no one seems to notice the communion table.

This year one of the seniors, who had previously studied elsewhere, said that he had seen the communion table in use only twice: once when it was piled high with books for free distribution, and the other time when it was being used for the Lord's Supper and was fifteen feet removed from the Cross, because the Cross is attached to the wall. In any case, whenever the minister stands behind the table, as the minister ought to stand unless

he looks upon it as an altar, he must hide from the people's view the Cross which is a visible symbol of the Presence.

These minor matters, however, can be corrected. In every case thus far the communion table is where it ought to be, especially when it is surmounted by the Cross. To be consistent, the Cross should be on the Table, not on the wall of the sanctuary; or if the Cross is there, it should be lifted up. Meanwhile we all rejoice that our young men in the universities are learning to think of religion in terms of majestic beauty and of worship in terms of august splendor. Likewise are we glad that our seminary students are learning to think of preaching as a part of public worship.

If we were thinking further about the central altar we might consider the architectural monstrosities which unwise ministers and unskilled architects have perpetrated where the other parts of the edifice do not harmonize with the central altar. But in liturgics, as elsewhere, it is a safe rule to judge any tendency as it appears when everything is in its favor. From this ideal point of view everyone should grant that among the various churches today there is a large and a vital place for the central altar.

The case for the central pulpit is more difficult to formulate, and still more difficult to justify. After reading the books about worship one may be tempted to feel that it is almost impossible, or at least quite difficult, to lead in public worship today in a parish church which has a central pulpit. Since many a parish cannot afford to tear down its place of worship, or even remodel at a cost which seems prohibitive, the minister may be tempted to be restless. He may even want to move.

The facts, however, do not wholly warrant such a feeling. According to John Ruskin,³ himself a lover of the Gothic church with its central altar, the traditions of the early Christian Church favored the use of what we now call the central pulpit. To those earlier traditions the Church in many places returned after the Reformation. Of course the Reformation oftentimes went too fast and too far. In the swing away from the central altar, the Reformers did away with much which we are now striving to restore.

But still the Word of God tradition, which prevailed after the Reformation, did much for which we should daily render thanks to God. One thing was the exalting of the Bible to its central place in the House of God. During a recent summer which I spent in England and Scotland I preached for five successive Sundays in the Trinity Presbyterian Church at Birkenhead.

³ *Stones of Venice*, II, Appendix 6.

To me the most impressive act of public worship was that of the beadle who went into the sanctuary preceding the minister, bearing to its place on the high pulpit the visible token of God's Presence; that is, the Bible.

That Bible dominated the worship of the sanctuary. For example, in the space on either side of the pulpit, and facing the pulpit, not the congregation, was the robed choir of men and boys. Occasionally they sang a descant. Always was their music uplifting. In every other part of the worship one likewise had the feeling that the minister was the man behind the Book. When he read either of the lessons, he was reading the Word of God. When the minister led in prayer he was still the man behind the Book. In short, the holy men who in other days built up that parish church had a strong sense for religious drama. It all centered in the Book.

During that summer I visited the shrines which I associate with some of my homiletical heroes. I found the central pulpit at Edinburgh in Free Saint George's, which I associate with Alexander Whyte and a later succession of brilliant men; at Carr's Lane, Birmingham, where I thought about Robert William Dale and John Henry Jowett; at Union Chapel, Manchester, where I thanked God for Alexander Maclaren; at City Temple, London, where I thought of Joseph Parker and heard Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead; at Westminster Chapel, where I remembered John Henry Jowett and might have heard Dr. G. Campbell Morgan; and at the Tabernacle in South London, where I gave thanks for Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

If anyone protests that these men have been preachers, that is true. But those who used to worship under the leadership of Spurgeon or Maclaren report that either of them was as gifted in prayer as in preaching. The same was true of Jowett. When he was at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City there would sometimes be in attendance on Sunday afternoon as many as three hundred clergymen. Not a few of them were Episcopalians, including more than one bishop. Any of them will testify that when Jowett stood behind the central pulpit and led in worship the throne of grace seemed as near as if there had been a central altar.

The point which really matters is one which proponents of the central altar usually ignore or even misrepresent, of course unintentionally. They rightly insist that the central altar should symbolize the presence of God in the Sacrament. (Usually they forget that there are two sacraments.) But these writers often speak about the central pulpit as if it were intended to glorify the preacher. Sometimes it does, just as the central altar some-

times calls attention to the priest. But in neither case is this the intention. The purpose of the central pulpit is to exalt the Bible. The Bible in turn is only a means of grace, not an object of worship. But so is the Cross, or the Church, a means of grace. What a pity when the means obscures the end!

Theoretically, it is easier to exalt the Sacrament in a sanctuary with a central altar than where there is a central pulpit. Practically, my own experience and observation have been otherwise. In one parish where I ministered for seven years there was a central pulpit. That was where I most enjoyed the celebration of the Lord's Supper. In another sanctuary with a central table and a side pulpit I found it harder to exalt the most important ceremony in all the Christian year.

Looking back over the times when I have received the Sacrament while sitting in the pew, I feel that wherever the architect has done his work well, the minister who is leading in worship where there is a central pulpit is often less in evidence than when there is a central altar. Of course any such impression is personal and subjective. What matters is that public worship is largely the expression of Christian feeling, and that we who have grown up in churches with the central pulpit are likely to commune with most satisfaction in the sort of sanctuary to which we are most accustomed.

As for the prominence of the minister, that depends partly upon the work of the architect, and even more upon the spirit of the minister. There is about the central pulpit nothing which necessarily exalts the man, just as there is about the central altar nothing which necessarily requires him to be inconspicuous. In fact, there is a saying that a certain clergyman was able to strut sitting down! Whether there be central pulpit or central altar, every one of us needs to remember with James Denney of Glasgow that it is impossible at the same time to call attention to Jesus Christ and to oneself.

In a parish church which many of us know quite well, the minister is scarcely visible as he sits quietly behind the massive pulpit. Except when he is standing to lead in worship, the focal point of interest is the open Bible. Whenever he stands, he thinks of himself as the man behind the Book. Beneath such symbolism is the basic fact that the Bible is the source of his authority. If the source of his authority were the Church, the historic way of symbolizing that sort of theory is to have the central altar. In any case we all agree that there should be in every sanctuary some one focal point of interest, and that it should point to God, not man.

In another well-known parish church the presence and the personality

of the minister obtrude themselves repeatedly, even though the pulpit is at the side. Despite the fact that the robing room is near the chancel, the minister comes into the sanctuary down the middle aisle at the end of a procession where he is far from inconspicuous. During every part of the ensuing hour he is in plain view of almost every person who cares to see him. From time to time he parades in front of the communion table and the Cross. When he celebrates the sacrament of the Lord's Supper he stands between the people and the Cross. In other words, after having read what the books say about the Christ-centered service whenever there is a central altar, one still feels that no style of interior architecture has any monopoly of liturgical virtues or liturgical shortcomings.

What then shall we do with the communion table? If it is a table—not an altar, with a mediating priest—there is something to be said for having the table in front of the pulpit. In a high sense the table belongs to the people, not to the minister. If it stood removed from them as far as possible, such remoteness might lead to the assumption that only the ordained man of God should have access to that part of the sanctuary. But according to the New Testament teaching that all believers in Christ are priests, all of them should have free access to His table. Hence it may well stand close to where they sit in the pews.

In my own boyhood among the Covenanters I never ceased to feel a sense of holy awe on Communion Day. That service was the culmination of all the worship, including the preaching, during the weeks intervening since the last celebration of the Sacrament. Across the front of the church and on a level with the people extended the long table, spread with spotless white. Even on that day, towering over both table and communing people was the open Bible. From that Book the people of God had learned to look upon the table in terms of the Cross, and to feel that the Communion Feast was an experience on the mountaintop with the Living Christ.

The heart of the whole matter is that while there is a real place and a real need for the central altar, there ought also to be in a sanctuary of another sort both a place and a welcome for the central pulpit. Such is the conclusion of Professor Robert Will,⁴ of Strasbourg, whose three volumes, *Le Culte*, ought to be translated into English. No man living seems to know more about the history and the spirit of Christian worship. From a different point of view, much more practical, Dr. Andrew L. Drummond, of Scotland,

⁴ See *Die Christliche Welt*, 1933, No. 16.

in his book, *The Church Architecture of Protestantism*,⁵ states the case for the central pulpit where the forms of worship are not prescribed.

As a student of church architecture Doctor Drummond rightly feels that builders of churches with the central pulpit have made many blunders, probably more than builders of churches with the central altar. Where churches with liturgical forms have tended to follow set patterns—at least with reference to the arrangements within the chancel—churches without fixed forms have felt free to experiment. When every building committee does what seems right in its own eyes, the resulting architecture is often awful. But a brighter day seems to be dawning.

Doctor Drummond believes that ministers with adequate knowledge of what free worship ought to mean should co-operate with competent church architects in working out plans for preserving the symbolism of the uplifted Bible, while carefully avoiding the faults which appear in many churches. For example, if it seems necessary to have the organ and the choir back of the pulpit, one of Drummond's beautiful cuts shows how it is possible to enclose modest organ pipes in a pleasing panel, and then put in the center a Saint Andrew's Cross, as the crowning glory of it all.

Another way to use the wall space for the glory of God is to have a window, with quiet colors which will admit only a little light, so as not to tax the eyes of those who worship. In the window there may be a cross, or something else distinctly Christian, such as the open Bible. There should be nothing in the way of complicated symbolism, and nothing conspicuous to proclaim the identity of the donor, thus calling attention away from the things of God.

Even more prominent is the central pulpit. Doctor Drummond suggests that it be so massive and so firmly fixed that it cannot be moved, and that in a sanctuary of any size the pulpit should be somewhat high. The controlling purpose is to set apart this portion of the sanctuary, as well as all the rest, exclusively for the worship of God, and to let the worship all be dominated by the Bible. In a congregation which worships in the sanctuary at least twice a week, and celebrates the Lord's Supper only once a month, or once every quarter, the practical importance of the pulpit is obvious.

The communion table, however, deserves more attention than it usually receives. To begin with, it should be larger than in some of our churches,

⁵ T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1933.

and it should be set apart for its holy use. One way to insure its sacredness is to cover it with a rich cloth of a color in harmony with the other furnishings of the sanctuary. Still another way is to have on the center of the table at all times a cross. If that is not in keeping with local traditions, Doctor Drummond suggests that there may be at the center a tray for bread and on either side a chalice for the wine. Thus at every time of worship the man in the pew would look upon these reminders of God's redeeming grace.

Of course the communion table should never be used in any way which would mar the beauty of its symbolism. Since the offerings of God's people express their hearts' devotion to him, the plates for the offering may perhaps have a place on the table, but one wishes that they might rest elsewhere, as they do on the day of the Sacrament. As for the flowers, they too have their place in the public worship of God. But since their beauty does not suggest anything relating to the Lord's Supper, why not set apart some other place for the flowers?

The most interesting suggestion from Doctor Drummond is that on one side of the communion table there may be a lectern, and on the other side, equally prominent, a baptismal font. Thus when the worshiper enters the sanctuary he would see the visible reminders of both sacraments, and he would think of them both as deriving their authority from God through the Bible which lies open on the pulpit. Such at least is the theory which undergirds the ways of worship in some of our parish churches which still have the central pulpit.

The practical inference is that the local minister ought gladly to accept the architectural plan which he finds when he becomes the pastor. As time goes on, and as finances warrant, he may by God's blessing lead to a much better arrangement of the pulpit, the communion table, and the choir loft. If he has ideals he is likely to wish that the choir and the organ were in the balcony at the rear, so as to be heard but not be seen. In nine cases out of ten, however, the minister should make the most out of what he has.

Much as we need a revival of concern about church architecture, so that every sanctuary shall be worthy of its high calling, vastly more do we need a revival of concern about leadership in public worship as the finest of all the fine arts. Even in the humblest sanctuary, with the least satisfactory central pulpit, it is possible so to lead in public worship as to make everything center round the Book. One way to begin doing so is to cease referring to oneself as "the preacher," and inviting people to come out to

a "preaching service." Why not stress the Church, not the minister, and the worship of God, not the sermon?

However, there is a large place for the sermon. Apart from the Lord's Supper, and the public reading of the Scriptures, no part of public worship is more vital than the sermon. In fact, there is a call for preaching about the symbolism of public worship. Without throwing stones and mud at those who worship God in other ways, one can preach from time to time about the central importance of the Bible, and about the custom of having it at the center of all the worship and the other services of the Christian Church. For the first message of the sort one may use as the text Revelation 1. 3: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."

In the other parts of public worship, also, the man who knows how to lead is able to focus attention on the truth as it is in God, not on the person who stands behind the Book. By choosing hymns which body forth the glory of God, by reducing announcements to a minimum, by learning how to pray in public so that no one in the sanctuary will be conscious how one is praying, and in countless other ways, one can keep first things first. Thus in time one can train the members of any congregation to worship God in the beauty of holiness. Such a program of self-discipline is likely to prove more helpful to the people, and more conducive to the peace of Zion, than frantic endeavors to do away with the central pulpit. As a rule, the fault is not in the pulpit but in the man behind it.

Above all does the pastor need to know how to lead on a special occasion. One need not be a believer in fixed forms of worship in order to sense the vital importance of religious ceremonial, and one need not be a sacramentarian in order to stress the observance of the two sacraments. Sometimes one wishes that marriage also were a sacrament, and one is glad to hear a good woman say about a recent marriage ceremony, "That service was unusually religious." In other words, it was in keeping with the teachings and the ideals of the Book.

Is the celebration of adult baptism to be a climactic experience in the life history of the man who for the first time is putting on the uniform of Christ as King? Or is this rite to be merely a passing incident, for which the minister need not mentally and spiritually prepare in advance? Is the public reception of new members to be one of the crowning experiences in the spiritual life of the parish, or is this ceremony to be only a matter of

form? Carelessness about such matters is largely responsible for the feeling that there is something wrong with worship which centers in the Bible. Here again, the fault is in the leader.

As for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, how can one make it the supreme event in the spiritual experience of God's people? Once again, effectiveness depends in large measure, under God, on the spirit of the leader. Does he look upon the approaching celebration of the Sacrament as the climactic point toward which all other worship, including the preaching, should prepare the way? Close as he should come to the hearts of the people at other times of worship, never should he come so close to the hearts of those who bow down in their pews, or kneel at the altar rail, as when he breaks the bread and gives the cup in the name of the Risen Lord.

Such a celebration of the Sacrament is as possible where there is a central pulpit as where there is a central altar, or vice versa. Since many of us believe in free worship we ought to be able to adjust ourselves to any sort of interior architecture, and look upon it as a visible sign of God's invisible grace. So if in the providence of God any young minister finds himself in a sanctuary with a central altar, to which he has never been accustomed, let him enter heartily into the ways of worship which center round the presence of the Living Christ as symbolized by the table.

On the other hand, if the young minister goes out from the university with its Gothic chapel, and from the divinity school sanctuary with its central altar, only to find in the meetinghouse at the crossroads a central pulpit devoid of beauty, let him remember with the Apostle that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels." Instead of longing to fly away to some beautiful isle where the people have never heard of a drab central pulpit, let him learn how to lead in worship from that central pulpit. Let him also train the people to worship God in the beauty of holiness.

In the course of five or ten years the right sort of leader can bring about a parish revival of concern for public worship. He may even lead to a desire for a church edifice worthy of its high calling. He is more likely to create and foster a desire for whatever changes ought to come in the physical appointments. But all the while he should be cautious about suggesting the removal of the central pulpit. Rather may he find, as many of us have found, in that central pulpit earth's nearest approach to heaven. On that pulpit is the open Bible, and in the open Bible the minister and his people alike should behold the face of the Living Christ.

"God Is Not Dead"

ROBERT H. BEAVEN

IN an arresting phrase, Sabatier describes Jesus as one "in whom we find optimism without frivolity and seriousness without despair." The significance of the phrase lies not in the fact that it credits Jesus with a series of desirable, though isolated, attitudes but in the fact that it credits Him with an organic combination of two attitudes which appear to be mutually exclusive. It claims that Jesus achieved a synthesis which we universally desire but quite as universally fail to achieve, the synthesis of optimism and realism.

Obviously this is a combination devoutly to be wished. We want optimism; of that there can be no doubt. We want it in the realm of life as naturally as the scientist wants order in the realm of truth, because it affords the only basis upon which to proceed. Optimism makes an integrated life possible as order makes an integrated universe possible. And we want both because we are so made as to desire unity, harmony, and integration rather than conflict, chaos, and disintegration. We want, and we need, optimism.

Ardently as we desire it, however, it can never completely satisfy us unless it withstands the crucible of experience, unless the serious and realistic facts of life can be interpreted and understood within its framework. We don't want a hope that is frivolous, that is held in blissful blindness to the bad, that is the mere projection of our wishes. The urge for unity, which prompts us to see life hopefully, prompts us also to see life whole, for without an inclusive facing of the facts any unity we achieve is partial and compartmentalized, that is, actual disunity in the larger setting. We want hope, but we want it rooted in the "givenness" of realistic fact. We would have optimism and realism at one and the same time.

More often than not, however, this synthesis of the two eludes us and we vacillate between them as though they were mutually incompatible. We have seasons of hope when idealism runs high and when the progress of events seems to substantiate an attitude of optimism. Then, suddenly, we are confronted by tragic realities like depression, revolution, violence, and war, which give the lie to our hope. Thus faced with the full seriousness of life, we swing to the opposite extreme, abandon our hope, and sink

into the morass of despair. We seem confronted by the necessity of an "either-or"—either we cling to a hope which betrays itself to have been ill-founded, or we cling to a realism which greets us like Dante's Hades, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." It is the presence of this apparent dilemma which gives Sabatier's phrase its significance. Why do we vacillate between optimism and realism and why was Jesus able to combine them?

I should like to submit that our vacillation results from the lack of a conviction that was central in the life and thought of Jesus, namely, the conviction that God is a living Reality whose will and power are effective in man's history and with whose outworking creativity it is man's task to co-operate. To put it conversely, it is the conviction that man is not alone in this world and that history is effected not only by his power but by God's. The record of Jesus' life is the record of one who believed God was active and who thought of His own life as submissive to and co-operative with His. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." Leaving aside for the moment any question about the validity of His belief, we can say that Jesus acted as though there existed a greater Reality than Himself with whose power He could align Himself creatively in this world. To Jesus, man is not just an operator; he is a co-operator. This is one of the most important facts of his existence.

If this be so, it follows that man cannot really understand himself, his situation, or his problems apart from this reference to a living God. Applying this point of view more expressly to the two attitudes we are discussing, we would say that any endeavor by man to formulate either his optimism or his realism without any reference to the living God overlooks the only factor that can keep his optimism from being frivolity and his seriousness from being despair.

In order to amplify this thesis, let us consider the optimism of the past few decades which has been rooted not so much in a belief in God as in a belief in man. The confidence underlying our hope was that "we could do all things." We went forward under the impetus of a robust faith in our essential goodness and in our sufficiency to work out our own salvation. Our optimism, that is, was held without any particular reference to a living and active God. While we did not deny His existence, we formulated our hope on the assumption that, for all practical purpose, He was not needed.

Two implications of this optimism, which are significant in assessing its weakness, were that man himself, being by nature good, needed no chang-

ing and that the problems of this world arose from factors external to man himself. We believed that we ourselves were all right but that we were hampered in our innate progress by externals which it was our task to change. Technology, eugenics, knowledge of economic laws, legal codes and imposed systems—these were the keys to the Kingdom. Our salvation was to be found in science, that branch of knowledge which made possible our manipulation of, and conquest over, the external world. The root of our troubles was without, not within, and we were optimistic because we believed we could change the externals.

This preoccupation with externals, derived from man's assumption that they, not he, needed changing, of course produced a mechanistic interpretation of life by the very nature of its focus. Thus, paradoxically enough, the very era in which man humanistically overrated himself was the era in which he became mechanistically underrated. At the same time that he was basing his optimism on his own power over things, he was only concerned with the power of things over himself, thus invalidating in practice the very power that, in theory, was his hope.

Now obviously the past few years have given a severe jolt to this man-centered optimism. The progress of events has indicated that it was ill-founded, that it overlooked some crucial factor that is necessary to make an optimistic view substantially real. This factor, we are maintaining, is God.

However, and this is extremely important, to say that this kind of optimism is frivolous because it leaves God out of account is not to say that man should abandon effortful struggle against hampering conditions and assume that God will miraculously bring him into the Kingdom, for that is frivolous in affirming God's action in the unknown future while it denies His action in the known present. But it is to say that man overlooks the real cause of his troubles, and is therefore frivolous, when he assumes that there is no Power beyond himself, for in so doing he regards himself as ultimate and thereby overlooks the possibility that this very ultimacy, which he feels, is at the root of his trouble because it sets him against his fellow men and produces conflict with its attendant tragedy.

The reason for this is that the claim "man is supreme" has no meaning as an abstraction, for there is no such thing as man in the abstract. There is only this man or that man, this group of men or that group of men, biologically motivated to be self-centered both individually and corporately. Consequently, in reality, it is always some man or men in particular who

claim supremacy and, in so doing, perpetuate their separateness from other men to whom, perforce, they deny a similar status in order to preserve their own. Thus conflict, with its mutual thwarting, continues.

For example, in time of war, each party to the conflict regards itself as ultimate and as the embodiment of all that is good. It lays the blame for evil upon its enemy (a factor external to itself) and exempts itself from the judgment it imposes. By its own claim to ultimacy it refuses a similar status to its enemy and thus remains divided from the latter and in conflict.

In similar fashion, capital separates itself from labor by self-concern over matters which it delegates to be supreme, and labor retaliates with a similar partisan concern. The world is full of particularized ultimates and these can never be shared. The world is split into the camps of Mars precisely because man and men are going their own way, recognizing no greater Reality than their individual or corporate selves. Man is forever making his own individual interests ultimate; that is, he is forever making himself God. And that is the root of his trouble. It is not in externals, but in internals. Therefore, any optimism that is built upon the foundation of man's self-reliant sufficiency proves frivolous because it overlooks the divisiveness which such self-reliance fosters and by which its hope is frustrated.

It is for this reason that we maintain man's optimism must be formulated with reference to a living God. Our hope will be realistic only if it is rooted in some factor that makes real the possibility of overcoming man's claim to ultimacy, which is divisive. This we believe to be possible only if there be some Ultimate beyond all men, to whom they are all related and by virtue of whom they are united above the self-centered interests that divide them. Our hope, be it noted again, is not that God will save us if only we abandon human effort; but our hope is that, God being alive, there is the portent of men rising above their separatist claims to supremacy and their absorbing concern for self by the discovery that God alone is supreme and demands from them concern for their fellow men. Leave this reference out of our hope, and it is frivolous.

In like manner, at the other extreme, leave this reference out of our seriousness and we are doomed to despair. Take as an illustration the contemporary reaction against that man-centered optimism we have just discussed. While riding on the crest of that wave, man was dashed into the trough of disillusionment after the World War, beaten by the waves of a world-wide depression, and well-nigh capsized by another titanic conflagra-

tion. Thus confronted by the seriousness of this world at the very moment he was bending all his efforts to recreate it, what alternative was there for man but cynical despair? From manic, he swung to depressive.

Now the implications of such despair are akin to the implications of that optimism against which it is a reaction, in that both are essentially humanistic, that is, they are formulated without any particular reference to a living God. Despair always implies a reliance upon man alone for it affirms that when we fail, the whole game is up. It takes no cognizance of the possibility that another Power may be active in the crisis. It takes its bearings from the seen and implicitly denies any "unseen." It assumes that what is done to man himself and by man himself in the immediate present is a sufficient basis on which to draw conclusions. It abandons that historical perspective which reveals the possibility that the centuries may reverse the verdict of the hours. Its theme is that our hope is entirely man-centered but that we can no longer hold to such hope realistically.

This contemporary seriousness, which implies an admission that the manipulation of externals is not enough to guarantee optimism, is despairing because it affords no alternative basis upon which to proceed. At the very moment that it abandons its hope in the sufficiency of changing externals, it suggests the necessity of an internal change in man himself, but its humanistic basis makes such change impossible. For it interprets man as existing in no relationship that confronts him with either the necessity or the possibility of changing or being changed. His nature, humanistically assumed to be supreme, is alone and ultimate and, therefore, divorced from anything that can make it different. Despair, thus, becomes complete and the confidence expected in a man who has made himself God gives place to a resigned and futile despondency.

Now to maintain that this man-centered despair is ill-founded is not so easy as to maintain that man-centered optimism is ill-founded, for the immediate realities of the day seem to argue for the former as strenuously as they argue against the latter. But it is only fair to point out that if the immediate realities of former years proved no sound basis for a lasting optimism, the immediate realities of today do not necessarily form a sound basis for a lasting despair. That is, the final verdict of history may rescind our present judgment. While this belief is always in some measure a venture of faith, it is not simply wishful thinking, as we shall maintain later.

Pending that later development, we can legitimately say at this point,

however, that the possibility of believing despair to be ill-founded is enhanced if we can find in it the same weakness that reveals the frivolity of optimism. That is, if we can find an underlying similarity between both a frivolous optimism and a despairing seriousness that is deeper than their apparent difference and which constitutes them extremes of one position rather than two contradictory positions, then it is possible that a criticism which we can accept of the one will also apply to the other.

What we are proposing is that they have such an underlying similarity in that both are man-centered and lack any reference to a living God. And that, we maintain, is the point of their weakness. It is that which gives the lie to man-centered optimism, as we have already maintained. Consequently, it is that also that gives the lie to man-centered despair.

Now again, to say that seriousness is despairing because it leaves God out of account is not to say that we should resign our own effort and avoid despair by trusting in a miraculous future act of God, for that is actually despair saved only by the grace of wishful thinking. But it is to say that man overlooks his real hope, and is therefore desolate, when he assumes that there is no Power beyond himself, for in so doing he makes himself ultimate and overlooks the possibility that the darkness of the hour is not his crisis but God's judgment. If it is his crisis, despair follows naturally. But if it is judgment, it is at one and the same time hope, for judgment implies not only that man has been seeking his salvation where it is not to be found but also that there is another Power, operative in the judgment, which is man's hope if he would but work with it.

We escape despair, as we escape frivolity, only if that which causes our trouble, namely, ourselves, can be so related to a Reality beyond us as to change and be changed, so related to another Power active in this world that we can read the hour's darkness not as a crisis confirming our own insufficiency but as a judgment confirming the continuous reality of God's demand for love, which frustrates all attempts at self-sufficiency, but which also remains our salvation if we would but co-operate with it.

Our vacillation, we repeat, results from trying to find our optimism and our realism on purely human grounds. Jesus' synthesis resulted from finding them on theistic grounds. Jesus did not hope because He thought His own power warranted that hope; nor did He despair when He thought human events might have warranted that despair. Throughout His life, He placed His trust in God and tried to throw His life into co-operation

with God's power. He sought to fulfil the way of God as completely as possible in His given situation, to love as God loved, thereby releasing God's activity through Himself. His life was built on the assumption that obedience to the will of God set free the only creative energy for the ultimate transformation of evil, so He gave Himself completely in love. In doing so, He revealed unto us an alternative that affords optimism and avoids despair, because in it man is working with the everlasting God; an alternative that affords seriousness and avoids frivolity, because in it man can, and must, rise above self-concern to love, even at the cost of his own life.

Lest the implications of this position remain purely theoretical, let us apply them concretely to the present international situation. The war is the contemporary embodiment of chaos and evil and confronts us with the necessity of decisive action. More often than not, the alternatives pictured before us are those extremes we have criticized as devoid of a conviction of God and as, therefore, either frivolous or despairing.

We are conscious that evil is abroad. We are told that Hitler is its cause and are summoned, in one alternative, to use our own power to stop him. We must rally our armies and navies, our man power and force, and throw it against the Germans. Despite the hardship involved, this alternative is essentially optimistic in its implication that we can overcome evil, caused by a factor external to ourselves, by our own self-sufficient power.

The only other alternative generally pictured is dumb resignation to the spread of wrong, effortless submission to Satan, which is interpreted as despair because it affords no effective resistance to evil. Thus our relationship to evil is presented as an "either-or"—either we stop it or it doesn't get stopped. The implication in both alternatives is that our own force, or lack of it, is the only determining factor in the fight against that which produces chaos and tragedy. For all practical purposes, God is dead and it all rests on our own shoulders.

But however obvious these "either-or" alternatives seem to be, we are all conscious in our more serious moments that they do not reveal the whole truth. For instance, our tendency to despair is always mitigated by the belief that our ideals are true and lasting, not simply because we can defend them, but because they are rooted in the nature of things. We don't really believe that democracy and freedom will be forever eliminated if Hitler wins, that in destroying us he can destroy them. We believe that the validity and reality of our ideals is rooted in something beyond us. And we further

believe, therefore, that he who opposes them is self-frustrating. Thus, in a certain sense, we don't really believe there is nothing that will stop Hitler but our own power, for we suspect he will stop himself in the long run by the means he uses. Hence, our despair is never quite complete.

Nor is our optimistic belief that we can overcome evil by our own force quite complete. We tried it in 1914 without success and we can't escape the suspicion that such optimism may be as ill-founded today as it was then. We apparently overlooked some factor before that gave the lie to our hopefulness; may we not be overlooking the same factor now? And that which we overlooked, was it not the fact that the root of war lies in nations regarding themselves and their own ends as supreme? And if that is so, is it ever overcome by force, for is not the resort to force but one expression of this assumed supremacy? Are we not still proceeding on the basis that evil derives from some factor external to ourselves which we must change? Are we not assuming our own goodness and ultimacy, so much so, in truth, that we may even deny the very ideals we cherish in order to preserve them! We can't escape our questionings—is not such an optimistic dealing with evil frivolous, at least in the hope it envisages, in overlooking our own implication in the self-centered divisiveness which splits the world and causes war?

These, and similar, questions make us suspect that the "either-or" alternatives do not reveal the whole truth and they prompt us, therefore, to seek a third alternative which will avoid their weaknesses. If Jesus is any clue for us, such is found in the conviction that God is active in this world and that what we are called upon to do is not to *defend* Him, as though He depended upon our own power, but to *obey* Him and His will as completely as possible in our given situation. This means that we attempt to live in freedom, equality, and love toward all, friend and foe alike, and refuse to live in their opposites of suppression, force, and hate. It means that we discern the darkness of the hour to be, not just our crisis, but the judgment of God calling us, in and through the darkness, to change from that self-centeredness which has produced its own frustration into an active and creative co-operation with His will, expressed in loving others as ourselves. It means abandoning the belief that we are supreme and that our own power is the sole determinant of events; it means, equally, abandoning the belief that God will do all for us so that no effort is required of us. It means accepting the belief that God is alive and active in the present his-

torical judgment revealing not only that we have been seeking our salvation where it is not to be found but also that there is another Power, operative in the judgment, which continues even though we perish and which is our salvation if we would but turn to it. The acceptance of this alternative, which demands overbrimming effort, does not carry the implication that it will be immediately effective in saving our own lives, for that, after all, is a man-centered criterion; but it does carry the implication that it makes us co-operators with the only Power that ultimately overcomes evil, namely, the love of God, and that, therefore, it is the only path to victory.

The validity of this position can be defended by an appeal to Jesus, for in His death we see illustrated the three alternatives we have been discussing. There were two groups then that thought the power of man would determine the issue. One group saw Jesus as an undesirable man, massed its force against Him, and crucified Him. It was optimistic in believing man's strength could determine the outcome.

The other group, the disciples in the garden, saw Jesus as a prophet of God and wanted to unite its force to protect Him from the conquest of evil. They, too, thought man's force would cast the last die, so when they were forbidden to use the sword they felt themselves impotent, believed they were resigning hopelessly to the spread of evil, and despaired. They thought the cause was lost and left Him. They despaired for the same reason that the other group rejoiced, namely, that man's strength would determine the outcome.

But it is central to the Christian conviction that the optimism of the one group was frivolous and the despair of the other, untimely. For we believe that the decisive power in that situation was not released by the slayers nor inhibited by the disciples' impotence, but released by One who continued right up to the end to obey the love that was God's in His given situation. The centuries have proven that Jesus' obedience unto death actually unloosed a force for the ultimate transformation of evil out of all proportion to the human force involved.

It is in a like obedience that we find our hope, without frivolity. It is in such a cross that we see life's seriousness, without despair. And that the Christian roots his hope in a cross is testimony to the conviction that beyond the power of man is another Power, obedience to which and co-operation with which, even at the cost of life, yieldeth the final victory.

God is not dead!

The Risk in Christian Worship

ALBERT B. COHOE

THE Gospel had been read at the morning service and the choir was singing the response to the Gospel. The Gospel had been the familiar affirmation of the capacity of choice implicit in the very nature of being human: "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." This had been followed by the story of Ananias and his wife Sapphira.

In the reading of their story Ananias and Sapphira had lived again as sudden death had preserved them for the Christian centuries: two frugal householders swept into the excitement of the communion of saints by the rush of joy which followed the victory of the Spirit in Jesus Christ the Lord. Once again they had impulsively joined those who, having possessions, sold them, that the newly-found companionship might not be destroyed because of the poverty of those who were poor. Once again, with the price of their field in their hands, they had childishly schemed together how they might seem to do what they eagerly wished to do, while they did with futile deceit as they had always prudently done. Once again as each alone and lifeless crumpled to earth, the young men instantly adequate wound up the body, carried it forth and buried it, but Ananias and his wife Sapphira lived on, as they had survived the centuries, in the awed affection of a fellowship of men and women whose charity was being singularly enlarged by a fresh impression of the Creator's concern for creatures so eager to be human and, through fear, so readily inhuman.

They lived again to bring us to prayer as they lightly gave their life in a free society for the bright tokens of compulsion they grasped in their deathlike grip. We were made ready for the authority of the prayer from the Psalter which followed:

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes;
And I shall keep it unto the end.
Give me understanding and I shall keep Thy law;
Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments;
For therein is my desire.
Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies;
And to no love of gain.

O turn away mine eyes lest they behold vanity;
And quicken me in Thy way.
O stablish Thy word in Thy servant;
That I may fear Thee.

The prayer moved with deliberate pace as it followed the sincere music of the devout Elizabethan, William Byrd. Each movement of the prayer was introduced by a single voice inviting the worshiper, as music can, into the perfect privacy of his own awakened consciousness and surprising him with the fullness of his consent to the strong affirming response of the full choir.

The prayer "Teach me" led with the directness of an arrow into the heart of one's vocation, into the steadily accepted responsibility. There one had been taught without vagueness and without confusion as swiftly changing conditions made their unquestioned demands upon his alert understanding. The prayer so vitalized outpaced the music as the passion of a calling explored the meaning of life to the very end, then assaulted the understanding with the perplexities of immediate needs, then merged with the music in memories and prospects of the unique joys of wholeheartedness.

The brief organ interlude between the first and second movements of the prayer gave the time needed for the prayer "Teach me" to become the prayer "Make me." For no man ever knows the surge of energy to the free and meaningful adventures of an accepted and an unquestioned vocation without having to reckon with his anxieties and his ambitions as they clamor for the service of the fresh energy and steadily dispute the authority of the calling. The music took the sober tone of a prayer of confession of desire for the devoted life, then deepened into a plea for the reenforcement of desire, a plea full of memories of waverings, then abruptly named the enemy of life, "the love of gain."

Again the brief interlude sustained by the music of the organ gave the moment of time to follow the love of gain into its dream of power, where the dignity and the importance of one's own inadequate skill seemed pitiful conceit, seemed romantic nonsense unsuited for life in a real world. After such memories one had prayed in words which throbbed with the sincerity

of the music, "O turn away mine eyes lest they behold vanity; and quicken me in Thy way." As one returned to his own place and to the demands made upon his understanding and skill by men and women and boys and girls whom he knew, he could quietly and gratefully join in the prayer, "O stablish Thy word in Thy servant; that I may stand in awe of Thee and Thee alone."

The music of the organ now carried us over a familiar way as we waited for the Christian exclamation of joyful confidence in a world knit together in the unity of the spirit with God the Father and His unique Son, our Lord. Then a new voice, the voice of a substitute for the day began the great theme,

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
And ever shall be, world without end."

In the singing of the first phrase I found myself thinking, "What a gorgeous voice." Then as I followed the voice I left the genial company of men and women at prayer, left off praying as my mind was possessed by a familiar impression, the impression of aloof and coldly impersonal wielders of vast and superhuman and irresistible powers, inhabiting realms of remote and impenetrable mystery whence came the impersonal forces in the midst of which man lived his pathetic life.

The singing which had quite unconsciously occasioned the intrusion of this impersonal impression had taken no more than fifteen seconds. The spirit of communion informed the response of the full choir, and the prayer led by the minister, at least for the minister, and certainly for many the singing of the final hymn of praise, so that the congregation was fittingly dismissed with a Christian benediction, "May the love of God, the grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and the blessed communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now, and forevermore." The fact however remains that in the midst of Christian worship an ancient Christian hymn was so sung that it praised a trinity of superhuman officials mighty in the power which pushes us about as stones are pushed by a glacier, but utterly alien to the understanding which gives us respect each for the other's solitariness and binds us together in the intimate and enduring unities of mind and heart.

This impression would doubtless have passed with the moment of its happening, but when after the service I thanked the choirmaster for the music of the day he looked up quickly and said, "You surely do not thank

me for that solo." Then he added, "No regular member of the choir could have sung that way and I had quite forgotten that a good singer might sing that way." Later in the day a member of the congregation who was not a trained musician asked, "What happened in the singing of the last anthem this morning?" When I replied, "Well, what happened?" this was the answer: "Something happened which was quite discordant with what we were doing." Later in the week a man who was asked if he had noted anything unusual in the singing of the final anthem of the service, reported that he had said to his wife in the midst of the prayer, "Ah! a virtuoso." It became necessary to examine this impression of the impersonal might of superpersons which came into my mind when a voice sang, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost."

It was impossible to blame the singer for the impression, for though on this occasion it appeared impishly in the mind of the minister in the very act of the blessed communion of common prayer, and though it seemed more definitely diabolic than it usually seemed, yet it was at once recognized as a familiar spirit, often entertained, frequently with awe and sometimes with dread. It was not a familiar spirit that peeped and muttered, to be heard solely by spooky listeners at the keyholes of heaven, but a spirit that had gathered the substance of its impressiveness in the remembered experiences of the life of a man on earth, and, in that sense, a familiar spirit.

In any congenial company it would be possible for any one of the company to affirm, if the occasion arose, that he had never known a moment when his mind could not reach out to the understanding mind of some other human being. If we understand others with any graciousness it is because we have been graciously understood when as yet we were without understanding. We may with great benefit to ourselves and to others dwell on the grace in which we have stood and in which we now stand, but we easily forget that this grace of understanding has its being in men and women each one of whom faces from birth to death the essentially unchanged hazards which have always confronted every human being who has ever lived on this planet.

We may live in air-conditioned apartments and may move swiftly from place to place in air-conditioned motor cars, express trains and aeroplanes, but we still glance at the weather reports. These predict the prospective behavior of that which has not yet been taught to temper its heat and its cold, its sunshine and its shadow, its rain, its snow and its swiftly circling

winds, either to the shorn lamb or to the weary anger of a struggling farmer and his ill-fed family: the weather, which has not yet given a nod of recognition to man's presence on the planet. A man may not know that his life is implicated in the interplay of mighty energies but he does know hunger and thirst, burning heat and freezing cold, he gasps for air when the air thins, he remembers the feel of the surf as it tossed him from his feet, rolling his body like a log in its undertow. The swift current which clutched his body as his foot slipped when he fished the lovely river alone will have power to clutch his body as long as he lives. A man knows, or feels, that the earth whence his body comes will in a few brief years gather his dust to its dust in the unthinking indifference of dust. Life provides each man with his own unique and vivid impression of a might beyond his might, a might indifferent to his need, a might unconscious of existence, a might incapable of such consciousness.

But though the impression which had possessed my mind in the singing of the words, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," had been of might like the river's might when it had tugged at my unbalanced body, yet there had been as these words were sung the very definite impression of persons exercising vast powers affecting the fate of human beings, but doing it as the river does it, as the river had clutched my body, without passion, without intention, without recognition. It was the impression of superpersons capable of the accomplishment of sweeping purposes affecting the lives of millions of men and women, boys and girls, generation after generation, but persons free from the trivialities of recognition, and concern and pity for any one man or woman or child of all these swarming generations. This was the diabolic impression, and, as I have affirmed, it seemed a familiar impression, its substance discoverable in the remembered experiences of life.

It may be of interest to note in this necessarily autobiographical quest that I cannot recall having had this impression until after my undergraduate days. While at Chicago University Divinity School it fell to my lot to spend a Sunday with a church in one of the outlying industrial districts. As was the custom I had the midday meal and spent the afternoon with a deacon of the church, his wife and their two children. They talked of the church and the church people, of the changing Sunday customs of their community, of an outing they had once a year when they crossed the city to Lake Michigan and spent the day with their children on the beach, of the home they had

bought and of their savings month by month to pay for the home. As they talked I felt that all their plans were made tentatively, the annual outing, their little home, even their place in the church and their hold on the simple and decent surroundings they had for themselves and their children. All they had depended on something which was always in their minds. This was finally revealed and that simply because I listened to their unaccustomed story with a very poignant sympathy.

The father, a very gentle man, with no suggestion of robust health, was the foreman of a floor in a large woodworking establishment and there had been trouble brewing for some time between the management and the union. Any day a strike might be called. Six months out would sweep him and his family from their home, from their church, from their decent surroundings into the unfathomed depths of the poverty of the great city. They discussed neither the union nor the management. They talked only of the river that might rise any day and overrun its banks and sweep their lives into the immense waters to which it flowed. This was my first impression of superpersons with great purposes. Evidently until then I had lived in a very limited human world where men were as we knew them: this was something different.

During the early decades of this century many of the men creating now famous business enterprises enjoyed the intimate fellowship then existing in the less formal Protestant churches. They were not powerful and important supporters of these churches, but men who sought the society of those concerned with the soul and the soul's salvation. Such a man, when asked by his minister how he had made such an astounding success of his business, replied, "The truth is that I am not a good business man. I suppose I might be called a sort of philosopher in business. In any case I survey the disorganized condition of business in some special field, I see changes that must take place if the business is to be made efficient and economically sound and I secure the services of men of good business ability to bring about these changes. I have been singularly fortunate in that I have been able to secure the services of men of exceptional business ability who have been able to eliminate wasteful and foolish competition." As they talked of the methods of elimination and combination, the minister said, "But these businesses you pick up and move about are all made up of human beings who have their homes and their children, their churches and schools, it is not just business." To this the successful philosopher of business very quietly

replied, "If I stopped to think of the human beings involved in a necessary business reorganization I would be a complete failure, I would leave the business in the same wasteful condition in which I find it." This reported reply has remained in my memory as a glimpse of a very kindly superperson and his doctrine of the flowing river, the river that must flow, but cannot be made to flow if the men and the women, the boys and the girls to be caught in its current are recognized by the river.

In the early days of the century, before the necessities of business corporations had acquired the authority they came to possess, the president of a considerable corporation announced to his executives at the beginning of a periodic depression the policy of curtailing production and maintaining prices. When asked by an executive how he proposed to curtail production, the president produced a list of the least profitable mills, each the sole industry in the town which had grown up about it. The executive said, "You cannot close these mills; if these mills are closed every bank and business in these towns will be ruined." The president reached to his desk for a sheaf of papers and handed the executive copies of the telegrams which had already been sent closing the mills. We have learned to accept these necessities perceived by and decreed by shrewd intelligence, when men do for a business that which a just man would not do for himself.

As I have been writing the account of these remembered experiences I find that I have disturbed the lively storage of the years that have gone, as incident after incident has lived again, each waving the flag of this same impression of superpersons, authors of vast purposes which by their high decrees flow like mighty rivers sweeping men and women, boys and girls to the river's goal which is never reached.

This then is the impression that possessed my mind, that suddenly informed the names of the Blessed Three with a definitely diabolic character when a substitute singer with a gorgeous voice sang, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." I must now add that the impression was at once recognized as thoroughly diabolic, but an impression very much at home in a service of worship. It came without apology, came with flying banners and sounding trumpets, came magnificently thrusting the humility of a man's faithfulness to the demands of his vocation into the dust of the despised and rejected. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, more splendid than Solomon in all his glory, more splendid than any flower of the field that ever flowered, took instant possession of a mind

engaged in prayer, instantly emptied it of prayer, leaving in place of prayer the aroused memory of an awe outrageously overbearing, an awe explored by the fearless obedience of Jesus Christ our Lord, and once for all exploded by His death of shame on the Cross.

We had gathered together in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. By the sweeping power of His forgiveness each worshiper had been freed from the torment of the persistent and futile nagging of deeds done that ought not to have been done, of deeds left undone that ought to have been done; each worshiper could bow in adoration before the Man on the Cross in His deed of full and free response to the needs He perceived in that place, at that moment; each worshiper was free to rejoice in and to explore the responsibilities to which his skill and his understanding had been called. It may be asked, "What has this to do with the mission of the Church to solve the complex problems of a confused world?" The answer is, "Absolutely nothing." Christian worship is an act of faith in the power of the love of God and is concerned with the "fear and trembling" of the man who stoops to the insignificance of perceiving and doing the will of God in the place it has pleased God in His wise providence to place him.

We had moved together, each in the perfect privacy of his own mind and heart, until we were ready for the authoritative direction of a prayer accepted by many generations and now helped by music gracious with profound understanding and graciously sung. We could pray together, but each for himself:

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes;
And I shall keep it unto the end.
Give me understanding and I shall keep Thy law;
Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments;
For therein is my desire.
Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies;
And to no love of gain.

O, turn away mine eyes lest they behold vanity;
And quicken me in Thy way.
O stablish Thy word in Thy servant;
That I may fear Thee.

We waited for the Christian exclamation of joy in God, the Father, made understandable to us through His Son, our Lord, living with Him in

the unity of the Spirit, making prayer the supreme privilege of the life of man. Then a gorgeous voice sang, as gorgeous voices often sing, saying, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." Prayer was abruptly halted. The voice failed to express the spirit of communion. The words named persons, persons of power with whom one could not commune; persons a man may obey, may placate, but never with self-respect.

We had obviously reached that point where man in his service of worship to Almighty God either participates in some supreme and ultimate victory of the spirit he knows in himself, or lends himself to the praise of emptiness. Always in all ages the degrading fear of superpersons using vast powers with inhuman indifference has waited to possess and to enthrall the lax mind in the high moment of worship. This seems to be the risk of Christian worship, the failure in that which it attempts to do; a degeneration into indifference at the very point where that which has power to bind one man to another in understandable fellowship of thought and action perceives itself to be the power in all creation.

The Theological Seminaries and the Ecumenical Movement

HUGH THOMSON KERR, JR.

IN A STUDY made in 1933 as to how far the seminaries at that time were interesting themselves in the problem of unity, it was found that "the strictly denominational schools had classes in denominational history and polity and that most, if not all, of the denominationally detached institutions had classes in the polities of the several denominational bodies. *In not one seminary, however, was there any adequate course in the study of Christian unity.*"¹ For anyone concerned with or interested in theological education that last sentence is a humiliating indictment, and those who are alive to the ecumenical movement cannot but feel that the seminaries have been lagging behind in a problem toward which they should have been taking the initiative. That indictment, thank God, does not hold true of the seminaries today! But they are still far from taking the lead in this matter.

Repeatedly in recent years the seminaries have been urged to take the ecumenical movement seriously and to make room in theological curriculum for courses on this vital subject. For example, the official report of the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order, 1937, under the heading, "What Can We Do to Move Towards the Unity We Should Seek?" makes the following direct suggestion: "It is to be desired that theological colleges, faculties or seminaries should make provision in the curriculum for instruction of the future ministry in all that pertains to the drawing together of the various Christian communions, with special reference to the more significant developments and plans of present-day ecumenical movements. The chairs dealing with doctrine should include instruction in the doctrines and life, not only of the church to which each institution is attached, but also of other communions. Chairs of church history, liturgics, symbolics and missions should deal with the history and work of all branches of Christendom."² Following this same line there is a similar statement in the "Proposals Looking Toward Organic Union Between the Presbyterian Church in the

¹ C. S. Macfarland, *Christian Unity in Practice and Prophecy*, p. 273. (Italics mine.)

² Chap. VI, (v), 2.

United States of America and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America," 1938, under the section, "Things that might be undertaken in common." It reads: "That in order to foster the spirit of mutual understanding and sympathy between the churches, their clergy, candidates for the ministry and laity be encouraged to seek opportunities of forming a better acquaintance with each other, of studying in either communion the history and genius of the other, especially in theological seminaries and in the exchange of professors, and of co-operating in public service."³

In *The World Mission of the Church*, Findings and Recommendations of the International Missionary Council, Madras, 1938, under the chapter on "Co-operation and Unity," the Council urges "the continuance and further extension of co-operation in fields and in types of work where it is imperfectly practiced . . . there is need for a great extension of it in such fields as those of theological education, religious education. . . ."⁴ The World Conference of Christian Youth, Amsterdam, 1939, while not directly concerned with theological education nevertheless struck the note other world conferences sounded in decrying the prevalent ignorance, in this case among young people, concerning "the problem created by the existence of separated denominational churches."

In the meantime, what have the theological seminaries been doing in the interests of the ecumenical movement? It is not easy, of course, to answer that question, for it is not easy to know how to estimate and evaluate institutions which differ so radically as to requirements, curriculum, faculty, et cetera. Some attempt at an answer can be made, however, at least for theological education in this country, by confining the inquiry to those institutions which have been accredited by the American Association of Theological Schools. This Association published in June, 1938, its "First Report of the Commission on Accrediting," the first paragraph of which explains the origin and purpose of the Association and the Commission on Accrediting. "The American Association of Theological Schools, successor to the Conference of Theological Schools and Colleges in the United States and Canada, was organized out of the older Conference in 1936 by the adoption of a new Constitution. This Association has in its membership 79 theological schools in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. Article VII

³ A full statement of the Proposals will be found in C. C. Richardson, *The Sacrament of Reunion*, Scribners, 1940.

⁴ P. 128.

of the Constitution of the Association provides for the setting up of a Commission on Accrediting, and specifies its duties as follows: 'It shall be the duty of the Commission on Accrediting to institute and maintain a list of Accredited Theological Schools under standards determined by the Association.' " The document then proceeds to set forth the standards by which an institution is adjudged accredited, namely, admission requirements, length of course, curriculum, faculty, library, finances, et cetera. The published list of officially accredited theological schools names 45 institutions now operating in the United States and Canada. Since this published report, other schools have been accredited by the Association, but for the sake of convenience this first official list of 45 institutions will suffice as a medium of investigation.

Although it is difficult to know how to make an adequate survey of these 45 accredited theological schools to determine what part they are playing in the ecumenical movement, one possible test would be to examine the catalogs of these institutions with a view to discovering what courses bearing on the ecumenical theme are being offered, and this is the test we propose to employ here. Such a test, to be sure, involves certain difficulties and disadvantages. The problem of theological curriculum, for instance, is so complex that the Commission on Accrediting in its report did not feel ready to make any general pronouncements and suggested that it was "so intricate as to merit a special study." Moreover, the formal descriptions of courses contained in the catalogs of the various institutions follow no standard pattern, so that it is often difficult to know by title or course description whether or not a particular course has to do with ecumenicity. But in this regard it ought to be noted that catalog course descriptions *should* make plain the nature and content of courses. After all, a catalog should give a true picture of the type of instruction offered. Again, it is true that there are other media, apart from courses of instruction, through which the ecumenical movement can be presented and studied, as for example in special chapel services or by way of a series of lectures on the subject, and no doubt certain institutions which do not offer specific courses on the subject may in one way or another bring the problem of unity to the serious attention of theological students. Not only so, but the subject of ecumenicity naturally emerges within the presentation of certain courses, such as Church History, History of Doctrine, Theology, and others. Thus it is possible for an institution to lay considerable stress on the ecumenical movement through the regular

prescribed courses. However commendable these procedures may be, the fact remains that the subject is of such magnitude and present significance as to warrant inclusion in the formal curriculum by way of specific course instruction. Accordingly, while there may be serious objections to a survey of catalog course listings as an ecumenical yardstick, it is perhaps the best method at hand and ought to reveal some interesting facts. Catalogs and courses undergo a certain amount of change and modification each year, and new courses are constantly being added. The catalogs used in this survey are for the most part the current editions, usually designated as "Annual Catalog, 1938-39, with announcements for 1939-40."

What, then, are the facts? The 45 institutions accredited by the American Association represent a wide geographical and denominational distribution. Dividing the country into rough zones, there are 21 institutions in the East, 7 in the Middle-West, 3 in the West, 11 in the South, and 3 in Canada. Denominationally speaking there are 8 Methodist, 8 nonsectarian, 7 Presbyterian, 5 Evangelical and Reformed, 4 Baptist, 3 Episcopalian, 3 Lutheran, and 1 each of the following: Church of England in Canada, Disciples, Continuing Presbyterian Church of Canada, United Brethren, United Church of Canada, United Presbyterian, and one joint Congregational-Baptist. It is difficult to group some institutions in this denominational framework, for even where there may be a definite denominational background or origin many institutions claim to be "undenominational" and advise in their catalogs that qualified students of any denomination are accepted. Unless the catalog definitely states, however, that the institution is nonsectarian with no ecclesiastical ties, that institution has been grouped with its denominational body.

Of the 45 institutions, 18 (40 per cent) offer some course or courses dealing directly with the ecumenical movement. It is not possible to determine accurately the significance of this proportion from a denominational standpoint. For example, of the 18 institutions, 4 are Presbyterian, 4 are nonsectarian, 2 are Methodist, 1 is Baptist and so on. A mathematical percentage could be worked out, but it is questionable whether it would indicate anything of value. However, it is interesting to note that there is no clear evidence that the strictly nonsectarian schools are more concerned with ecumenicity than the denominational schools, although this might be expected. As a matter of fact, comparing nonsectarian and Presbyterian institutions shows 50 per cent of the former and 56 per cent of the latter offering

courses on the ecumenical movement, a slight advantage for the denominational school in this case. Although it is true that aside from this instance the nonsectarian group shows a greater interest in ecumenicity than the other denominational groups, it is rather surprising to find that 50 per cent of such schools do not treat the subject at all in any definite course offerings. No group, it would seem, has cause for boasting.

It is also interesting to note that one Canadian school, itself the result of recent Church union in Canada, offers no course on Church union. Although the various Methodist denominations have recently united their forces and have shown by their action their interest in matters of unity, the percentage of Methodist institutions offering courses in ecumenicity is only 25 per cent, or two out of eight. At the present time the Presbyterian Church and the Protestant Episcopal Church are considering "Proposals looking toward Organic Union," yet only one Episcopal seminary offers a course on Church union. For many years the two largest branches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A., "Northern" and U.S., "Southern") have been talking of union, and the slowness with which these negotiations have proceeded, particularly from the U.S., "Southern," side may be accounted for in part by the fact that of the three Southern Presbyterian seminaries the only one to offer any course on ecumenicity is one that is under the joint control of both U.S.A. and U.S. churches, and the one which because of these circumstances has the most natural reason for being concerned with the problem. The total picture, therefore, is not encouraging, and if precise findings are not possible, the general implication is plain enough; the seminaries are not taking a clear lead in presenting the ecumenical movement through regular courses of instruction.

Among those institutions which do offer courses on ecumenicity, it is interesting to observe under what departments these courses are listed and the way in which they are designated. Eleven ecumenical courses are listed under the department of Church History, five under Theology, five under Practical Theology or the Work of the Church, and one institution has created a separate department on "Ecumenics" within the general department of History. There would seem to be no reason why one department is more suited than another for offering courses on the ecumenical movement. Recalling the statement referred to above from the Edinburgh Conference, it was suggested that "chairs dealing with doctrine" together with "chairs of church history, liturgics, symbolics and missions" are the appro-

priate chairs to deal with the subject. In connection with the subject of liturgics and symbolics none of the 18 ecumenically-minded institutions has any course on liturgics that has to do, according to the catalog description, with ecumenicity, and it is interesting to find that out of the 45 institutions only seven have specific courses on the creeds of the various churches.

Courses on the ecumenical movement are listed under a wide variety of titles, the following being representative: The Ecumenical Church; Ecumenical Christianity; The Church—with special reference to the problems of church unity; Problems in Church Union; Comparative Christianity: A Comparative Study of the Christian Traditions; Ecumenical Theology; Christian Faith and World Community; What is Christianity?; Division and Unification of Churches; Comity and Interchurch Movements. Occasionally the designation is striking and unusual. For example, one institution offers a course with the attractive title, "Living Issues in Present-Day Theology," and we are told the course is concerned with fundamental theological problems raised by the ecumenical movement, such as nature and revelation, the problem of God, evil and man, the Incarnation, law and the Church, faith and salvation.

One of the most distressing discoveries to be made in the course offerings of these 45 institutions is the amazing lack of course instruction on the Church. Denominational schools offer courses on denominational polity and administration, but courses dealing with the nature and function of the Christian Church in its broadest or ecumenical sense are few and far between and so scarce as to be conspicuous by their absence. This does not mean that the seminaries are utterly neglecting this basic subject, for it arises naturally in other regular courses, and courses on the ecumenical movement may be said to deal with the nature and function of the Church. True as this may be, nevertheless it would seem from the catalogs that the seminaries have been slow if not negligent in recognizing the reawakened self-consciousness of the Christian Church the world over to a new and vital awareness of her nature, function, mission, and message. That church leaders are aware of this is attested to by the large number of volumes dealing with the Church which have appeared in recent years.

It is not that the seminaries are blind to the problems facing the Christian Church today, but that they do not seem to be asking themselves the prior, more provocative question, What is the Church? In point of fact, they are very much alive to contemporaneous problems of all kinds with

which the Church has to do. For example, in running through the catalogs of those institutions not offering any courses on the ecumenical movement and noticing only those course titles which contained the word "Church," the following amazing list of courses was compiled: Church Administration; The Prayer of the Church; the Church Year; the Hymns of the Church; Church Architecture; Church Music; Church Art; the Church School; the Rural Church; the City Church; the Church and the Child; the Church and Young People; the Church's Educational Ministry; Church and Pastoral Functions; Church Economics; the Church and the Changing Community; the Church and Social Change; Church Administration and Leadership; the Church and the State; Social Creeds of the Churches; Church Polity; General Church Music; Practical Church Music; the Church and Industrial Society; Rural Reconstruction Methods and the Church; the Church and Labor Groups; the Race Problem and the American Church; the Church and the Changing Frontier; the Church and the Modern Family; Growing an Evangelistic Church; Church Efficiency; Women's Work in the Church; the Church Vacation School; and many others. This list seems to indicate that the seminaries are alive to the Church's task in regard to all kinds of social, educational, artistic, and community problems, but in none of the various institutions offering these courses is there a specific course on *the Church*!

These facts and statistics gathered from the catalogs of the 45 accredited theological schools may be interpreted in two very different ways. It may be held, on the one hand, that considering the comparative newness of the ecumenical movement, the seminaries are doing as well as can be expected and that each new academic year shows increased interest in this question. If, for example, the proportion of accredited institutions now offering courses on ecumenicity seems to be small, a survey of catalogs of seven years ago would indicate *not one seminary* vitally concerned with this subject. Thus, it could be argued there has been growth and development in the right direction. On the other hand, it can be held with equal reason that although there are signs of a growing appreciation of the ecumenical movement, the seminaries are lagging far behind and do not appear to be playing the part the Church has a right to expect of them. The fact that theological schools as a whole are not deeply interested in the question to the extent of offering course instruction on the problem, does not promise well for the future leadership of the churches in the direction of ecumenical education and action.

Perhaps both interpretations are worth careful consideration because they are both justified, but the world situation being what it is, the ecumenical movement is and will be undergoing its most severe testing, and it needs more than ever the enthusiastic support of the theological seminaries if it is to continue and grow in strength and power. It would be easy in these days to postpone ecumenical education and action until peace comes to our world, but the easy way is not necessarily the right way. In this connection we would do well to reread a page from the early history of the ecumenical movement. On August 1, 1914, there met at Constance, Germany, an international group of Churchmen delegated to inaugurate "The Church Peace Union," a movement sponsored by Mr. Andrew Carnegie and one in which our own Federal Council co-operated. It is one of the ironies of history that this conference dedicated to peace convened on the day war was declared! Nevertheless, in spite of this disheartening circumstance, the members of this conference voted to continue their efforts for peace and mutual understanding under the name of "The World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches," and it was through the persistent efforts of this struggling Alliance that the ecumenical movement survived the war to emerge the stronger and the more determined in the difficult years of reconstruction which followed. Surely it is imperative, then, that we today keep the fires of ecumenism burning so that the Christian Church, at least, will be able to transcend the strained relations now existing between nations and to exert a concerted Christian influence in the days that lie ahead, whether they be of war or of peace.

The Christian Home in a Warlike World

DANIEL A. POLING

ASERIOUS courtship should be neither too brief nor too long, but it should last forever. The attitude of a person toward marriage is more than an academic question. Wrong attitudes lead to a mismatching. Happiness is wrecked not only for the principals but for others intimately related to the principals. As a rule, a poor beginning makes a bad ending. The Christian Church, and before the Christian Church every form of religion, has been deeply concerned for and played a vital part in marriage relationships. Christianity more than any other institution or influence has affected the ideals of marriage, has lifted the level of family life, has enriched the emotions and the social practices of love and the home. The gospel of Jesus has been the emancipation proclamation of womanhood, and the Christian community has been the open door through which young people have passed to select their mates according to their own ideals and hearts' desires. Certainly dangers have arisen and mistakes have been made. Always to some, freedom becomes license. But democracy and Christianity have risen side by side, and with democracy and Christianity the marriage relationship has been enriched and glorified.

The inevitable problems and tensions of marriage yield to the spirit of Christ. Marriage draws heavily upon character, but a Christian marriage pays well for all it requires of self-surrender and personal sacrifice. The happiness we seek when we search for each other is associated always with surrender, but it is in such surrender that larger freedom, the freedom of comradeship and mutual achievement, is discovered. Another has said that religious living is zestful living, and the Christian life places emphasis upon qualities of greatest worth, upon highest loyalties, upon the bravest best. Here parents face their supreme opportunity with children, for the degree to which parents practice Christianity in their daily lives determines the extent to which God becomes real to sons and daughters. The terrifying indifference of the Protestant community in America, the tragic majority of nominal Protestants who are today unchurched—this and all of these stand back upon failures of the Christian home. Men and women who have something to remember, remember it! However far we may drift from the

family altar or from the example of devout parents, these remain as anchors for our souls. The arc may be wide but generally these anchors hold and we swing back. I do not believe that we need fear for Christian marriage if we ourselves are Christian. Christian marriage and monogamy are essentially one and human needs require a permanent union. Marriage provides for the full development of personality. It is as new as a new life, as fresh as a new home, and fundamentally it is as eternal as ever-emerging truth.

But the Christian home today faces problems and tasks, pressures from without that, unaided by school, community and Church, leave many homes compromised and all but helpless. Here the Church is our theme. Glad am I that programs and recognized successful plans increase in number and in the efficiency of their application. In these we have a fine and growing literature. Our denominational leadership is a source of worthy pride to every Baptist. I shall not presume to enter that field tonight. At the moment I am in the midst of a series of seven Sunday evening sermons titled "Building a Successful Home." In this connection I am conducting with an interested group of young people what we call conversational clinics. We meet through the supper hour.

As of the general *church program*, there are two practical plans that I would share with you.

The men of the Baptist Church in one of our largest cities, a church with all the problems of the downtown and at the same time university-centered location, five weeks ago opened a new kind of youth club. For three years the community had been studied. Surveys revealed that twenty-three tap rooms and night clubs—some of them particularly offensive—immediately surrounded that church and university. Under the *benign* influence of Repeal, these places had become immeasurably worse, and from the standpoint of young people vastly more dangerous than the pre-prohibition saloon. Repeal is that kind of success! The under-privileged home, in this particular community, could not meet the social and amusement situation, nor could that situation be met within the church edifice. The pastor was not satisfied to preach against these evils, and the men of his congregation were ready to sacrifice and follow his leadership. The story must quickly be finished. In a fireproof room with more than six thousand feet of floor space, an amusement and recreation center has been equipped at an expense of \$5,000. There are games and music; there is a food and soft drink counter; there are seating accommodations at small tables for more than

two hundred; the room is attractively decorated; there are employed trained managers and a gracious, alert Christian hostess. In the first three weeks, more than six thousand young people availed themselves of these facilities and not one serious, unhappy incident occurred. From both university and community the numbers increase. Some mistakes made elsewhere have been avoided. The income has given a substantial balance over the cost of operation, and the nonprofit corporation hopes soon to establish a new center in the vicinity of another university. There are thousands of locations throughout America where such clubs as these should be opened—not within the church, not by the church directly, but by men of the church and with the inspiration and guidance of the church. Here is a new ally for many a hard-pressed home. Here is a new kind of temperance crusade. Here is a new adventure in Christian social service and a further demonstration of the fact that average American youth wants to be decent.

This same Baptist Church, in studying the problem of the indifferent Protestant—and there are more than eight hundred thousand unchurched Protestants in this particular city—was startled to discover that for more than a generation it had contributed steadily to the tragic, terrifying army of indifference. Families would remove to the suburbs. Love for their church home kept their letters, and, as often as circumstances allowed, their attendance downtown. But inevitably indifference developed—if not with the parents, then with the children. School, community and friendship interests were not centered in the city. Again and again the second generation came to marriage and the establishing of their own homes with indifference not only to the church of their parents and the church of their own baptism, but without any church interest. This particular survey was an ominous revealing for our Baptist denomination and for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Do you say—"Well, then, change the location. Move out!"? But it is not always, nor is it generally, as simple as that. The downtown church has a ministry and, I believe, an ever-increasing ministry. Its task is difficult, but its challenge is unique and sets a man tingling to his fingertips. The downtown church must be supported in its ministry and a considerable part of this support must come from loyal, sacrificial members who have moved into the suburbs. Then, what are we going to do about it? The church to which I refer has decided, and after mature prayerful deliberation, by the unanimous vote of officers and congregation, has decided to do both—

to stay where it is and to move out! Two units of this church—not missions, two new places of worship of the downtown church—are being established in rapidly growing suburban areas. The pastors in charge of these new places of worship are associate pastors of the church. The membership is one membership. The treasury is one treasury. The Board of Deacons is one Board, as is the Board of Trustees. There is one congregational meeting. Each place of worship has also its own organizational life and a complete program of activities, with representatives on all church boards. Obviously, there are many details that cannot be discussed here and many problems yet to be solved. In one of these new places of worship there will be, for the present, no Sunday morning service—the desire of the people being to attend the morning service in the downtown church.

Now, this general principle may not be new, but this particular plan is different. In its application it has won the support of church officers and families who refused to consent to unite with another church in their community and whose support is sorely needed by the church they love, but whose children will now have their parents' church within walking distance. It has gone to them! Here is an earnest effort on the part of one downtown Baptist congregation to make its small but perhaps significant contribution toward the solution of the problem of Protestant indifference. And if our Master's high command has present-day validity—and it has—this church will prosper, prosper in all its parts, prosper on its ancient corner as well as with its new enterprises. For He said, "Go ye! . . . and lo! I am with you alway."

But there is something more! Today the fate of the family is part and parcel with the future of civilization. With civilization and Christian culture crumbling from the assaults of brute force and barbarous un-Christian philosophies, marriage, the home, monogamy, are more seriously threatened than at any time since the Christian era began. For Christians in the United States "Keep America out of war and help win the peace" is significantly more than a slogan or formula. It is an imperative of both democracy and religion. The dictatorships of Europe openly or covertly encourage sex relationships without the marriage bond. Propagation is power—military power and national might. Without regard for quality, without consideration of the spiritual, and with contempt for moral values, bodies are required. As never before since the federal idea of government was first born and then applied on the North American continent, the Christian home is

threatened, challenged by the enemy of both Christianity and democracy. The answer to the challenge must be constructive, sacrificial, dynamic and immediate.

From the standpoint then of the American Christian home, and equally from the standpoint of American democracy, let us consider America's sacrificial, immediate and dynamic program for peace.

It must be a program for peace, not a program for war. But it should be a program that for a nation forced into war represents a worthy goal.

For America, it must be immediate, for when any peace or armistice comes through a military victory, the powerful neutral that has not suffered will be despised.

It must be sacrificial. For America to speak on any other than a sacrificial basis to nations whose sons are dying would be a gratuitous insult.

It must be dynamic. War is dynamic. To capture the imagination of youth, the peace also must march.

But first, what of the proposed program for national defense? The overwhelming majority of the American people support an adequate program of defense. They are impatient of delay, and their impatience already takes on some aspects of hysteria. The argument that neutrality is a defense has been exploded by bombs over Scandinavian countries, by mass murder along the highways of Belgium and Holland. Neither honor nor weakness is sacred now. The American people are prepared to make all necessary sacrifices to protect American democracy from the ruthlessness that has despoiled the neutrals of Europe.

But also the American people are troubled—profoundly troubled. What of our present declared state of unpreparedness after an expenditure for preparedness in less than eight years of more than six billion dollars? Something more needs to be said than "Give us 50,000 new airplanes." Something more needs to be offered than words of belittlement against the searching criticisms of Mr. Lindbergh. And at the most and best, a program for physical defense is not enough. An immediate, dynamic, sacrificial program for peace remains as the imperative of this fateful hour.

We believe that such a program could unite the peacemakers of every shade and degree—unite us all, without prejudice to our fundamental, ultimate, individual convictions. Such a program would represent our common agreement and to that length we could march side by side to help win the peace.

With humility, and in brief, I propose for our consideration the following seven-point program:

- (1) America's support of a world agency for the administration of world affairs. This without interference with purely internal affairs.

Note: In other words, the application of the federal principle internationally. International relations are now administered by treaty and by secret treaty, by notes, by balance of power agreements, through secret alliances, and with intrigue. America may be able to stay out of this war, but she is in the world and cannot escape, nor should she escape, world affairs. Our Government serves notice on the belligerents that freighters in Norwegian ports must be assured safe conduct to their home harbors. The State Department notifies Japan that the *status quo* must be preserved in the Dutch East Indies.

- (2) America's support of police power for such an administration of world affairs.

Note: So long as we recognize this principle for community security, for the protection of personal property and individual life, must we not come to accept the same principle to make safe ocean lanes of travel and maintain international security?

- (3) America's support of open economic frontiers with free access to raw materials and natural resources and with reciprocal trade agreements.

Note: So long as there is economic control by the "haves" against the "have-nots," the economic causes for armed conflict remain.

- (4) America's support of collective responsibility for the administration of all colonies and mandates.

Note: Collective responsibility should everywhere be substituted for national ownership. So-called backward peoples should be the responsibility of all free and favored peoples and this responsibility should be administered primarily in the interests of the backward peoples.

- (5) America's support of the principle that higher levels of life and democratic institutions cannot eventually be maintained anywhere unless with their blessings they are made available everywhere.

Note: One man cannot hold another down without staying with him. The principle is universal. Also, it is the Christian ethic. I am my brother's keeper.

- (6) America's support of a coalition peace commission representing all political faiths, named by the President, and working with him to create and present this nation's sacrificial program for peace.
- (7) Finally: For such a program and with such a program, America's cancellation of war debts.

Note: Cancel war debts to help pay the price of peace. To win wars, nations have given sons and treasure to the point of physical, economic and social bankruptcy. Peace also has a price.

Do you say—"This is sheer idealism"? Very well, but idealism, some such idealism, must become realism or we shall face again and again, and yet again, the reality of war. As never before since the federal idea of government was first born and then applied on the North American continent, our freedom is challenged.

For this nation, there are presently but two alternatives: participation in armed conflict or that which is infinitely more to be desired—the presentation of a program for peace that represents our maximum of sacrificial offering. For this we have waited too long. There are those who insist that it is now too late. But such a program will remain as the ultimate and only answer to war. We have tried all other ways. Once more they have led the world to a catastrophe that may wreck civilization and twentieth-century culture for a hundred years.

The United States, with an immediate, sacrificial program for peace, even now could arrest the attention of the world. Very soon it may be too late.

Finally, the answer to the present world crisis is not in armies, nor in armaments, nor in fleets. Nor is the final answer in any plan. The world as we know it is headed straight for self-destruction and moving fast. There are many things required, but there is one and only one imperative—power enough to turn the world around! That power is Christ. The only answer for a total war is the total Christ.

Is There a Return to Religion?

RALPH SADLER MEADOWCROFT

THE aid of religion is being urgently demanded by representatives of almost every secular interest in America. President Roosevelt heads an imposing list of statesmen who desire, yea plead, for its help. Business men are not far behind, the universities have added their word, and the press has tried to outspoke the whole symphony. Indeed, columnists like Miss Thompson have gone so far as to claim that the future of civilization is dependent upon a sufficient religious force to revitalize its badly pummeled body.

Secularism can be defined as the concept of the world as a self-motivated organism. Its philosophy, ethics and guiding purposes are erected upon a materialistic foundation. As such, a secular idea of society is the opposite of that concept of life which flowered during the Middle Ages, and began its development in Western society as an inevitable reaction to the exaggerations of the later Middle Ages. In fact, so thoroughly had the apologists of medieval theism constructed their static system of social order, that when the new world of the fourteenth century emerged it found very few points where it could feel connection with the existing society.

The economic interests of banking and merchanting, which were undoubtedly the greatest results of the Crusades, were practically outlawed by medieval theology. At the dawn of the fifteenth century, the city of Florence actually passed a law forbidding the profession of banking to Christians but, finding that credit transactions were necessary, it decreed that Jews should take charge of the business. The theological lawmakers of the fair city argued that as Jews were damned already, it would not hurt them to practice a damning profession. Nationalism, which was conceived in the womb of fourteenth-century Europe, was anathema both to the ecclesiastical system of the Catholic Church and its political partner, the Holy Roman Empire. Personal morality, which in the changing world required a different ideal than that of monasticism, lost itself in the confusing doctrine of the Double Truth, and thus inevitably forced the people of awakening Europe into those naturalistic standards of which Boccaccio is both the exponent and the expositor. By the time the Renaissance had

reached its sixteenth-century high mark, the divorce between the spiritual philosophy of the medieval Church and the vigorous life of Europe was complete. The artists of the Renaissance decorated the new home of Catholic ecclesiasticism, but nationalist economy had found another mate in Protestantism.

For four hundred years this union has continued. Yet the most ardent defenders of Protestantism must admit that the marriage has never been as intimate as the earlier union of the Middle Ages. In spite of the vigor and unquestioned virility of the new husband, during four centuries the final decision upon all major questions has been made by the secular society with which Protestantism has lived. The eighteenth century saw the frank recognition of religion as a passive member of the household in England, except in the Evangelical movement where upon all major social issues the partners agreed to a separation, religion taking charge of the soul and its immortal destination while the secular society held complete charge of everything else. And in revolutionary France the drone was practically expelled from the hive. The framework of the prewar twentieth century was already constructed before the Stars and Stripes first inspired our fathers or Napoleon changed the face of Europe.

The philosophical basis for secularism had to wait for the nineteenth century, but in Treitschke's divine nationalism, Nietzsche's indignation, Huxley's science and Mill's morality, it received its triumphant right to separate existence and the second divorce was completed. So far as intellectual foundations were concerned the man of religion had no right to exist at all after the third quarter of the last century. Dean Inge has stated that today for the first time in seventeen centuries Christianity is confronting an alternative philosophy to itself, constructed upon pagan principles. The only error in the dean's statement is that it is understated. From 1875 it might be truer to say that Christianity existed in a world which had no further use for it. Comte's grandiose threat that "when science and metaphysics have completed their tasks we will bow God out of the universe," seemed to be prophetic of the generation. As the French philosopher patronizingly put it, religion was to be preserved, if at all, as a sort of social policeman, to keep the unruly elements of society in some sort of order, and serve as a harmless outlet for dangerous social emotions. The great prestige of religion carried it on into the twentieth century but it was accorded the value of a medieval cathedral like Lincoln or Chartres. It had become a museum,

a prized relic of a past civilization, set far away from the great metropolitan centers of modern affairs and decisions.

But the War proved a front wheel blowout to the shining automobile of secularism. It shot off the road which was called "Inevitable Progress" and, while the desperate steerers of the postwar world have managed to keep us thus far from complete destruction, the system has lurched so fearfully and been so hopelessly out of control, that we are all utterly sick of the great experiment. Having tried every possible materialistic proposal to get our system back on the road, we have awakened not only to the bankruptcy of the secular idea but also to its fallacy. For man has rediscovered his own spiritual nature and is growing conscious that his well-being lies in a redirection of society by religion. Hence, the appeals from the various departments of society that religion get us out of the mess.

This condition would seem to indicate the approach of a religious revival and a crowding of the churches. Yet such has not occurred and, to date, shows no promising signs of occurring on any large scale. The *Christian Herald* census of church memberships suggests a small increase in religious interest, but it would be rash indeed to prophesy the growth of that interest into anything like the proportions one might expect from the strong demands for the help of religion.

This phenomenon is confusing to many, particularly to the sincere members of the churches, but it is based upon a definite reason. Primarily, Christianity exists to bring men into communion with God. Its roots extend far into that Judaism which was concerned with God as Sovereign of the universe, to whom man owed fear, love and service. The process begins in Abraham who "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11. 10), is made prophetic in Elijah to whom the long drought and starvation of a nation was a just punishment for their disloyalty to God, and continues through both Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel to its fulfillment in the Apocalypse of Daniel. This tradition is counterbalanced in the history of Israel by the social gospel of Jacob, who regarded religion as an almost material asset to his daily life, and develops through the moral lawmaking of Moses, the military nationalism of David into the social prophecies of Amos and Micah. The two traditions reach their nearest synthesis in the Isaiahs, but the closing of the Old Testament finds them drifting far apart again, one as an ethical nationalism, which in the time of Christ flowered in the party of the Pharisees, while the common people were in-

spired by the other tradition; for they waited for the coming of the Messiah, who should miraculously redeem Israel. It was from this second tradition that Christianity chiefly grew. As Jesus and the majority of the original Christians were from the common people, it was natural that Christianity would bear the impression of their spiritual background. Contrary to much of our contemporary preaching, Jesus ministered primarily to relate men to God and not to build a perfect social order. Saint Paul, who gave Christianity its first theological system, interpreted Christ as the mediator of God and man. The heart of his faith is expressed in his words, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7. 24, 25). The relation of Christianity and the social order is that of a spiritual impulse within the existing framework of society. Thus the slave shall remain the property of his master but they shall also be related as "beloved brethren" of Christ. Women shall continue to be the property of their husbands, but they shall be a spiritual property whom the husband shall care for as a stewardship from God ("as his own body").

This has been the major emphasis of Christianity throughout the ages. The Catholic tradition is a sacramental system which is fundamentally concerned with the reconciling of the world with God. And Protestantism, despite its closer relation with modern society, has been primarily directed to the same end, as witness John Calvin's first article "Man Exists to Glorify God." Indeed, it is only in the decadent state of religion, during the last hundred years, that it has attempted to present itself as mainly interested in the construction of a world order. And it is worth noting that today, when the world is pleading for the leadership of religion, the more vital elements of Protestantism are reaffirming the "other-worldly" ideal of Christianity. Particularly is this true of the Barthian school of European Protestantism, but it is seen in America in the increasing collapse of theological modernism, and the growing influence of men like Reinhold Niebuhr in our theological circles. The permanent element in this awakened approach to Christian doctrine is precisely the recall of Christianity to its distinctively religious mission.

From this situation I feel that we must arrive at two conclusions. They may not be popular with either the secular interests which invite the aid of religion, or with the members of the church bodies who are the official custodians of man's spiritual reserves. It would be a happy result if the world could be assured of religion's help, and the churches receive the

glowing promise of filled pews and a larger share of leadership in the life of the world. Why cannot such a satisfactory conclusion be anticipated in the immediate future?

Such an expectation cannot be looked for because the world is not turning to religion at all. The calls for help from secular interests do not show a change of heart. On the contrary, what is being asked for is the subordination of religion still further to the secular world. In the last six years the Nazi rulers of Germany have made a determined effort to co-ordinate religion completely into the State, even to the point of making its Reich minister of religion a member of the cabinet. As such, religion would be entitled to the same importance in the nation as the financial interests of the Treasury, or the departments of education, army and navy. Under the Nazi scheme of things, religion inevitably becomes entirely secularized, for God would then be the servant of Adolf Hitler. This is a frank dealing with the attempt to make a pagan religion out of Christianity but, when driven to final terms, that is what the political, economic and cultural leaders of the democratic nations are seeking also. Their appeals unanimously agree in wanting the aid of religion to save civilization, the national morale and peace of the world. No word has been voiced of returning to religion for the sake of religion itself because it contains the only ultimate purposes of human life. These appeals want religion to get the secular society on the road again so that it can continue merrily on its way.

Thus, there is no real turning to religion at all. All we have is a proud Brahmin who, because he is floundering in a rushing stream, has broken his caste distinction to the point of begging the outcaste on the bank to pull him out of the water. But there is less than a reasonable guarantee that, should the outcaste be a good Samaritan, he would find himself left unrewarded and even unthanked, once the noble Brahmin felt the solid earth under his feet again. It is a hollow pretension to claim that these secular appeals prophesy a return to that communion with God which is the heart and soul of religion. Rather they indicate the final effort of the secular world to paganize Christianity and thus reduce it to a cogwheel in its own gigantic machine.

This fact impels us to a second conclusion. It is that Christianity cannot, without betraying its own principle, do what the world is asking. The basic claim of religion is that without a complete subordination of the secular social order to the will of God, it is not a true social order, however brilliant

or prosperous it might be. Without the recognition of this principle, religion would deny its own *raison d'être* if it injected into society a sort of psychic tonic which would give it a new lease on life. God cannot be made the servant of society, no matter how desperate the conditions may be. Lenin called religion "the opiate of the people" and thereby saw justification for its expulsion from the new order he attempted to build. But it would be equally illegal for religion to be the stimulant of the people. Christianity always has and must continue to claim the whole life or nothing at all.

This is why no sign of a genuine religious movement is apparent. Nor can such a movement be looked for under existing circumstances. Secular society will have to continue its uncomfortable journey still further until it discovers its own means of revival. The possibility of such a discovery must be granted by the secularist, though the religious man will deny that that possibility exists. If this power of revival is not found, the present social order will move on to a final destruction and all hope of secularism vanishes.

Then it may be that humanity, awakened at last to the illusion of a self-controlled society, will seek that other kingdom which is the realm and rightful sphere of religion—the kingdom of God.

Book Reviews

Christianity Goes to Press. By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.50.

IN his own inimitable style, combining friendly intimacy and scholarship, Chicago's emeritus professor and University of California's popular lecturer shares with a wider reading public additional treasures stored during a long career of research and discovery. The story of Bible making, the seminary Canon-and-Text course, has been told before. Doctor Goodspeed, as usual, gives a new slant by emphasizing the overlooked import of the publication business in the ancient world. Libraries with thousands of volumes; church chests filled with scrolls; private collections; and the direct witness of ancient writers testify to extensive book publishing long before printing.

Paul's letters were incidental. The first Gospels, however, were distinctly "published" works for wide circulation. They were the first books in popular Greek. Luke's definitely planned literary enterprise revived interest in Paul and his letters, eventuating in a corpus possibly gathered by Bishop Onesimus. Publication of the epistles created an enthusiasm for Christian letters, hence a new corpus of pseudepigraphic works. Both canonical and apocryphal gospels and epistles testify to literary fads. John's Gospel endeavored to carry Christ directly to the Greek mind without detouring through Judaism.

Publication was part of the secret of the spread of early Christianity. The master stroke on the part of Christians was the adoption of the leaf book or codex as standard for their Scriptures,

while the scroll long continued as the norm for pagan writings. Instead of a chest of forty scrolls, the Christian Church could take in hand its Scriptures *in toto*. Thus clever Christian publishers, meeting the needs of world evangelization, made the first true Bible.

The author's psychological approach to the reader is excellent, disarming conservative fears. Homely illustrations and suggestive rhetorical questions carry the reader along as in a personal discussion. Problems and data of New Testament scholarship are made clear. The main facts concerning later publication and translation of the Scriptures are included. Running all through is the suggestive thesis that the Church repeatedly was stimulated and learned much from its missionary endeavors.

A good review and refreshment for the minister. An excellent bit of reading for inquiring laymen.

CARL SUMNER KNOPF.

University of Southern California.

Pioneers of the Primitive Church.

By FLOYD V. FILSON. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

THE author, who is Professor of New Testament Literature and History at Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, here puts in print some biographical lectures given at summer conferences. He believes that the seminary professor and the parish minister ought to get closer together (many would heartily agree). So here, as in his valuable *Origins of the Gospels*, he takes the results of critical studies and makes them available in semi-popular form not only for the minister's private study but also for use as material

in preaching and in religious education.

The main object of this book is to study the key men of the Christian Church of the first generation. Professor Filson selects Peter, Stephen, Barnabas, Paul, and James the Lord's brother. There follow vivid, appealing portraits, which, while taking into account all contributing factors, present the five characters as real human beings who were mightily used by the Spirit of God.

A secondary purpose of the book is to trace the development of the Church in relation to Judaism. This is done in a way which is appreciative of the latter but which recognizes that the new movement had necessarily to break all national bonds.

Good biography is always fascinating. Biographical preaching, although difficult, is very effective. Here is abundant material. The author chooses his characters much more wisely than those who attempt to study all of the Twelve, regarding most of whom we know so little. Filson selects only one of that group, Peter, the greatest, and probably the most appealing. Barnabas, so often neglected, is given appreciative treatment. In describing Stephen we are given insight into the actual break between primitive Christianity and Judaism. The chapter on Paul contains material which is better known. Only the essay on James leaves the reader with regrets for its subject.

There are many admirable features in the book. The author is conversant with the best critical opinion but occupies a mediating position. By design he gives more Biblical references than footnotes, sending one to the primary source for primitive church history. There is an annotated bibliography at the beginning (the reviewer, as librarian as well as student, always wonders why in so many bibliographies the publisher is omitted and the place of publication included).

There is also a short annotated list at the end of each chapter, containing liberal and conservative works alike.

One of the finest things here is the frequency of application to present-day religious life. Here, as in the dedication of the book (to a classmate who was a missionary martyr), the author shows his devotion to the Church of today as well as to that of yesterday. The book ought to be valuable to many, not only as a source book, but as a link between the professor's classroom and the pastor's study.

JOHN H. SCAMMON.

Librarian and Instructor,
Andover Newton Theological School,
Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

The Search for the Real Jesus: A Century of Historical Study.
By CHESTER CHARLTON McCOWN.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
\$2.50.

ONE cannot read this book without involuntarily comparing it with a very famous earlier work which first appeared in German in 1906, in English translation in 1910. The parallelism is clear even in the titles: Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*; Chester C. McCown, *The Search for the Real Jesus*. The two works cover the same field, the history of the modern critical study of the life of Jesus and the Gospel records. Here likeness between the two works ends, and a series of contrasts begins.

The plan and treatment of the two works are altogether different. Schweitzer's *Quest* presents a colorful panorama of the modern life-of-Jesus research as dramatized in the personality and work of its key representatives: Reimarus, Strauss, Bauer, Renan, and so forth. McCown's *Search* follows a topical

scheme which excludes the colorful and the dramatic: the search for the historical point of view, the search for critical methods of historical study, the search for trustworthy sources, and the search for an historical interpretation.

Schweitzer's *Quest* is written with a brilliant bias, a monumental subjectivism—the eschatological emphasis—which constitutes its chief literary charm and its principal historical weakness. Schweitzer breaks deliberately with critical tradition; he is consciously revolutionary. McCown's *Search* is more academic, without bias, technically closer to the norms for the writing of history. McCown has no novel thesis to offer; he steers the course charted by the consensus of critical opinion.

Schweitzer's *Quest* is written with a passion; it champions a cause. The quest for the historical Jesus is ended, for Schweitzer is convinced that he has found Him—the eschatological, the all-too-historical Jesus. McCown's *Search* is devoid of the spirit of championship, as an historical work should be. The search for the real Jesus is still in progress, destined perhaps never to be completely successful but rewarding and to be pursued according to the canons that govern all historical study.

Schweitzer's *Quest* is a conscious literary effort, a work of great literary charm and distinction in spite of its subjectivism. McCown's *Search* presents materials that have gone through the mill of the graduate classroom, and this origin is evident in the style of almost every paragraph. The student will find Schweitzer more stimulating and provocative; McCown, easier to follow and more instructive. Schweitzer's *Quest* furnishes a more comprehensive grasp of the progress of the modern life-of-Jesus research as a whole. McCown's *Search* offers a more concise conception of the

origin, development, and attempted solutions of the special problems which the life-of-Jesus research has called forth.

In one respect McCown's *Search* is a much-needed supplement to Schweitzer's *Quest*. The great humanitarian of the French Congo has not yet found opportunity to bring his work down to date. The second, and last, German revision appeared in 1913 and leaves the last thirty years untouched. McCown's *Search* brings the reader down through this important period.

WALTER E. BUNDY.

DePauw University.

How to Read the Bible. By JULIAN PRICE LOVE. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

Understanding the Parables of Our Lord. By ALBERT E. BARNETT. Nashville: The Cokesbury Press. \$2.00.

OF the writing of popular books about the Bible there seems to be no end. These two, however, serve a real need, and ministers may commend them to that large company of intelligent Christians who ought to have a modern understanding of their Bible.

In a day when educational innovators are emphasizing the value of reading the great books in order to acquire a liberal education, a book on practical methods of reading the Bible should be welcomed. Plenty have been written from the standpoint of pious obscurantism. Doctor Love gently criticizes the various mechanical and unintelligent methods of Bible reading, and advocates breaking the book up into units of thought. Most of the volume is given over to a survey of the Bible in which such units are presented from almost every possible point of view. The point of view of historical criticism is frankly accepted, though the

author is clearly conservative in his own conclusions. Especially does that appear from his brief bibliographies where readers are advised to begin with Stalker's life of Jesus. Some dubious judgments are expressed such as in the interpretation of 2 John on page 147, but on the whole the volume may be warmly commended as a guide for the average man in reading his Bible by intelligent units and with some comprehension of its meaning.

With the publication of B. T. D. Smith's *The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels*, English students had at last a genuinely first-class book on the parables of Jesus. But as it was based on the Greek text, it was over the head of an average Sunday-school teacher. Barnett has performed a very great service by writing his interpretation of the parables from the English text. Here we have a thoroughly modern treatment, written in a devout spirit and without entering into learned minutiae.

The text of each of the Gospels is printed for all of the parables treated, followed by a succinct historical interpretation. The author first gives the application by the evangelist, and then cautiously considers the probabilities concerning the original use on the part of Jesus. Few books have distinguished so clearly between the parables of the evangelists and the parables of Jesus, but it is a distinction which must be made if they are to be understood. No attempt is made to classify the parables, but they are interpreted in the order in which they appear in our Gospels. The author does not preach sermons on the passages, though occasionally he expresses his opinion on the relation of the parable to the whole message of Jesus. He is strictly an historical interpreter. The "kingdom of God" is correctly understood in relation to the historical background and all modernizing expedients

are avoided. Naturally, some of the suggestions concerning the original point of the parable are too hypothetical to carry full conviction, and this reviewer would certainly protest the separation of the parable of the prodigal son into two parts. But he cannot too warmly commend this contribution, which makes the best of modern scholarship available to any general reader who really wants to know what the parables of Jesus mean.

CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG.

Oberlin College.

The Validity of Christian Belief.

By W. B. SELBIE. London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd. 5 s.

A Companion to the Bible. Edited by T. W. MANSON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$5.00.

THE volume by Doctor Selbie is a wholesome book dealing with subjects of perennial interest. Perhaps it inclines to run a little too easily to side issues like Mohammedanism, but it always does so in informing fashion.

Never does it content itself with superficial considerations—rather it illustrates Bacon's maxim: "Depth in philosophy bringeth man about to religion."

A distinction is made between knowledge about God and knowledge of God. The former is to be found through nature or history or the Bible or the Church. The latter comes only out of personal intercourse between the soul and its Maker, and rests on love, sympathy, faith and obedience.

Quoting Söderblom, the author describes the portals of revelation in the human personality as three—the intellect, intuition and the urge of conscience. An indication of the influence of Barth is found in the statement—"In Christianity, it is the givenness of God that counts." Again he quotes Brunner:

"Whatever else religion may be, it is a mode of human life, whereas revelation is a self-disclosure of God. In other religions men may seek for God if haply they may find Him, but really it is God who seeks man. There is no Christian experience worth the name that does not begin with a profound sense of consciousness of sin and issue in a joyful sense of forgiveness and emancipation.

"God's greatest gift to man is the endowment of power, a moral reinforcement which enables men to do that of which, without it, they would be quite incapable. Indeed, it is not too much to say there is in man a spark which is capable of being kindled into a flame by the breath of the Almighty."

Doctor Selbie has a strong word to say for eternal life, basing it on the love of God on which all Christian hope rests both for time and eternity.

This is not a brilliant book but it is sound and finished and a delight to read.

One cannot open the volume, *A Companion to the Bible*, without being impressed by the inclusiveness of its scope and the authority of its contributors. Names like those of C. H. Dodd, W. F. Howard, Principal W. F. Lofthouse, H. Wheeler Robinson, Professor Oesterley, glow from the pages, and other masters, too, but to mention them all is to cancel distinction. Everyone knows that the formulation of the Bible was incidental to the furtherance of the gospel, and that it centers in the Passion of our Lord. Not everyone knows the process of this mighty transformation, and to be guided in it by the foremost experts in every branch of Biblical knowledge is the most precious sort of a privilege.

Naturally that makes a book of rich background. It is a book for scholars but also for plain people, for footnotes have been avoided. Nor is there any absence of certainty about aims—"the

primary and vital interest of the Bible is that it records the authentic word of God."

This is a book to be often pondered and to be repaired to for frequent information. Five hundred and fifty pages of discussion and outline maps—was there ever such material assembled for the study of the Bible within the compass of one book! Truly it is a treasure trove.

JOHN W. LANGDALE.

Associate Book Editor of

The Methodist Publishing House
and Editor of RELIGION IN LIFE.

Moral Leaders. By EDWARD HOWARD GRIGGS. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

IN THIS volume, comprising the course of lectures presented by Edward Howard Griggs last March under the Drew Lectureship in Biography, Doctor Griggs has chosen to study the lives of six widely divergent spokesmen for the things of the spirit. The figures he has selected are Socrates, Saint Francis, Erasmus, Carlyle, Emerson, and Tolstoy. He brings to his task a wide cultural background and an indubitable sincerity. The book is a readable one and the writing has considerable charm.

The problem posed by the mere bringing together of these six lives is challenging. One is impelled to seek the common ground which they inhabit, the elements so shared as to constitute for each of the six men a claim to moral leadership. This problem is heightened by the divergence among them. What harmony can there be between the canticles of Francis and the war cries of Carlyle? Or wherein do Emerson's incorporeal musings enforce the earthy intuitions of Tolstoy? How is each a moral leader? The question implies something about the answer. If the reference of the adjective "moral" is to the

personal life; the life of man alone, that of the noun "leader" is to the social life, the life of men together. Many must follow for one to lead. Perhaps, then, the terms of the answer are indicated. Perhaps each of these lives presents a like equation. The dynamic for every life of moral leadership would seem to come from the intimate depths of the spirit, to come out of loneliness. But the working of that impulse must be powerfully external. A viable contact must be created between the leader and his age. His role must be at least dual, that of critic as well as prophet.

One wishes that Doctor Griggs's approach to this fundamental problem had been less oblique. One wishes, that is, for firmer definitions and a more direct attack upon central premises. It is possible that an explicit recognition of the social implications of leadership would have prevented some of the book's soft spots, the occasional sentimentality of the lecture on Francis of Assisi or the tendency toward mystification in the treatment of Tolstoy's Russia. Doctor Griggs can sketch in natural settings with a delicate hand. Each of his essays is decorative. It is only out of an inevitable conviction of the importance of the problem of leadership today that one ventures to ask for sterner stuff.

One is grateful, however, that the questions have been asked as they are in these six lectures. The truths of morality translated into terms of action must be heard again. There is a tendency to substitute for them only the harsh consequences of action alone. Doctor Griggs has added to his volume a list of suggested readings. It includes books which can reaffirm with eloquence the values by which his six men lived.

Dartmouth College,
Hanover, N. H.

JOHN FINCH.

The Church School and Worship.

By IRWIN G. PAULSEN. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.75.

MANY pastors and lay leaders and teachers, not only of his own but of other denominations, felt a distinct sense of personal loss in the death, earlier in this present year, of Irwin G. Paulsen. Associated for a number of years with the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church as head of the Department of Adult Work, and more recently with the New Jersey Council of Religious Education as secretary in charge of leadership training and adult work, he developed a wide circle of friends who esteemed him not only for his work's sake but for the high and genuine quality of his Christian character. There is reason for gratitude in the fact that before his departure there came from the press, as an abiding testimony to his long-time interest in Christian worship, this thoughtful and well-written book which, if studied, is capable of rendering a distinct service to many. If it cannot be said that this is for Christian workers the one indispensable book on the subject of worship, it must at the same time be said that no other of the numerous recent writers on the subject has produced such a book, and further that *The Church School and Worship* will prove stimulating and helpful no matter how many other books have been read. As stated by the author, its primary purpose is to provide guidance in the development of an effective curriculum of worship for the church as a whole and its several departments. This purpose it fulfills in significant measure.

The scope of the book is indicated by the chapter titles: I. What Is Worship? II. The Functions of Worship; III. The Worship of the Little Child; IV.

Making Provision for Worship; V. The Leadership of Worship; VI. The Program of Training in Worship; VII. Relating the Worship of the Church School to the Common Worship of the Church; VIII. The Worship of Youth; IX. Developing the Art and Practice of Private Worship.

WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY.

Secretary of The Joint Committee on Religious Education in Foreign Fields.

How Character Develops. By FRITZ

KUNKEL and ROY E. DICKERSON.

New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

THIS is a book on psychology for normal people. The authors follow Doctor Kunkel's well-known approach of the "We-psychology." In this view life is composed of two parts, the Self and the Ego. The Ego is not the essential self, but is a built-up picture of the individual which has been conditioned by culture and social inheritance. It is a false picture which one builds concerning himself, while the Self is the inner core of reality which lies behind this false Ego and is the ultimate reality.

According to this theory, each one is born into a "We-experience," like that of parent and child. As life matures, and the individual expresses himself, asserts his independence, there comes a "breach-of-the-we" experience. At the same time the individual is reaching out for fuller life and finds it in a fresh realization of the "We-experience" on a higher plane, as when the parent identifies himself with the child in a new experience. Great skill is required to permit the breaking of the original "We-experience," not destroying it altogether, but rather merging it with a fuller expression in a larger and maturing "We-experience." A person may have a

typical "We-experience" through identifying himself with his family, his organization, as his church, or his nation, or even some world cause. Each enlargement of the original "We-experience" constitutes progress. Growth, according to this theory, becomes a matter of ever enlarging this "We-experience."

The building up of the false self—the Ego—is discussed under four patterns. The child of comparatively inferior vitality in a relatively soft environment develops qualities which make him a "clinging vine" decreasingly able to live an independent life. The child of superior vitality in a soft environment attains domination by clever means, constantly inflating his Ego out of normal proportions into a kind of "star" who is always the center of attention. The child of high vitality in a harsh environment becomes a Nero who achieves his ends by force and cunning. This type hesitates not to resort to harsh methods. The child of inferior vitality in a harsh environment becomes a listless individual with no mind of his own and his initiative is stifled. The obvious lesson is that most people we know (including ourselves) tend in one of these four directions until the pattern of their Ego or false self, differs from their true Self or inner reality as the square differs from the circle.

This outer shell of seeming yet false reality must be broken. Often a major crisis performs this psychic surgery. The Self senses its defeat and is at times in despair. Out of this broken ideal, the individual attains, by processes not too clear, a new fellowship in another "We-experience" which includes other persons who are likewise groping in the same direction. Thus a new and larger or maturing "We" is realized.

The final chapter deals with practical steps of psychological self-education.

This section is replete with practical and helpful suggestions. Among the more important we might list the following: "Study your sensitive spots"; "Seek responsibility in a 'We-group'"; "Seek constructive criticism"; "Do something new"; "Seek fresh 'We-feeling' experiences, like some form of volunteer service"; "Build a sound philosophy of life."

The book is more than an exhortation. It cuts too deep for that, and its foundations are firmly laid in normal consciousness after wide experience and many tests. The illustrations light up the discussion and the analysis is excellent, often brilliant.

KARL QUIMBY.

Ridgewood,
New Jersey.

The Lower Levels of Prayer. By GEORGE STEWART. Nashville: The Cokesbury Press. \$1.50.

THE average man is neither a skeptic nor a mystic. He falls somewhere between. His mood is "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." He feels the need of all the aid that can be given to make the spiritual life more real; the presence of God more near.

Doctor Stewart's book is a helpful, practical guide along the pathway of prayer. There have been many compilations of prayers. These give the "what" of prayer. This book gives the "how." The suggestions are so completely simple and usable, that the author feels it necessary to call them the "lower levels" of the devotional life. The "higher levels" are reserved for the saints, with whom most of us will never be classed. The title jars slightly. All prayer would seem to lift life to a "higher level." There is nothing "lower" about any communion with God. But Doctor Stewart is eager that his suggestions shall

be of help to plain, ordinary, hard-working people, who are tired out at night, on whom life presses heavily and constantly. These folk who have no time for prayer, who think of the spiritual world as beyond their reach, are the ones he is especially eager to help along the way.

This practical note is found especially in such a chapter as that "On setting oneself to pray." Into a brief period of time can be gathered all the essential elements of devotion. One must (a) close the mind on other pursuits; (b) regard God with reverence; (c) think of the matters to be brought to Him; (d) speak of these matters to Him; (e) accept His response; and (f) withdraw reverently from the experience. An even more condensed form of prayer is suggested in the chapter on "Cells of Prayer," a cell being a period of five minutes, during which we have walled ourselves off from the day's distractions, and in which we use a form of prayer, previously prepared, and if possible memorized, and which will contain an act of adoration, thanksgiving, intercession, an affirmation of faith, and the Lord's Prayer. Such a formula may well be used at the beginning or close of the day, when there is little time for prayer.

Such a "cell of prayer" would be largely filled with prayers of one's own composition. There is also, however, great value in the use of formal printed prayers, particularly from the great church books of worship. These have been too much neglected, not only in Doctor Stewart's Scotland, but in other places where the Holy Spirit is supposed to speak extemporaneously or not at all. Other practical aids consist of a book of prayers, which one compiles and composes for his own use; lists of people to be remembered in prayer, some daily, some less frequently, because of varied needs and connections; and a map of the world,

divided into six parts, which is kept before the eye in the period of prayer, each section of the world receiving brief attention and remembrance on a day of each week.

The stress on discipline as an essential of successful prayer runs throughout the book. Prayer cannot be done casually, carelessly, superficially. Success here demands the same attention, labor, dedication, as success in other areas of life. "We are the same people when we pray as we are at other times, and no one need expect his praying to possess qualities of earnestness, concentration of purpose, vision, joy of communion with God, when his life is habitually lacking in these things. Our praying is an expression of our living, just as our living is the expression of our praying."

The book closes with a chapter on "Divine Guidance," which, while not alluding to the Oxford Group movement, seems to be an attempt to give a rounded interpretation of this movement's chief stress. Guidance depends on "traveling the same road as our Guide, and on using all the means, inner and outer, which God has provided to show His will." The whole of life is used by God to convey to us His will and His light. Through every part the Holy Spirit speaks.

It is particularly wholesome to have this book just now, when the life of prayer is being assailed and weakened by the pressures, not only of daily toil, but of nationalism and hatred. No one can keep his balance, and his faith in goodness and in humanity without keeping near to the overarching, forgiving, unifying love of God. Doctor Stewart's book is a help of more than usual value in keeping that inner life vital and effective.

PHILLIPS P. ELLIOTT.

First Presbyterian Church,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Descent of the Dove. By CHARLES WILLIAMS. New York: Oxford University Press. \$2.50.

THIS volume was a selection of the Religious Book Club of London and was recently distributed to its members at a modest price. The fact of this selection is enough to commend the book to Christian leaders.

The author states that it was his original intention to title the book, *A History of Christendom*. "It was changed lest any reader should be misled." The subtitle is worded: *A Short History of the Holy Spirit in the Church*. The book is based upon the thesis that the history of Christianity is the story of the activity of the Holy Spirit. And so it is! The chapters deal in turn with the crucial epochs of Christian history. The early Church was forced to define its faith. Later it had to become "reconciled with time," that is, the "ordinary process." The Church did not go underground, but rather prepared to drown itself in the "whole of normal human existence." As a next step, the Church enjoyed the "compensations of success." Then ensued the "war on the frontiers," and the "imposition of belief" (persecution). "Consummation and schism" came with Dante and the tragic spectacle of two rival popes respectively. With the Reformers came the "renewal of contrition," to be followed by a period of "disbelief" so characteristic of French skepticism under Voltaire. The last chapter deals with "the return of the manhood" under Wesley and Liguori. The last chapter also contains material on the humanistic social ferment of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as material on Kierkegaard.

Perhaps a few quotations from the text of this remarkable and unusual book will furnish the reader with the vocab-

ulary and spirit of Mr. Williams. "The beginning of Christendom is, strictly speaking, at a point out of time." "The history of Christendom is the history of an operation. It is an operation of the Holy Ghost toward Christ, under the condition of our humanity; and it was our humanity which gave the signal, as it were, for that operation." "Our Lord Messias had vanished in His flesh; our Lord the Spirit expressed Himself toward the flesh and spirit of the disciples. The Church, itself one of the Secrets, began to be." "But he (Paul) used words as poets do; he regenerated them. And by Saint Paul's regeneration of words he gave theology first to the Christian Church." Many passages could be quoted to show the poetic style of this writer. The volume is hardly a piece of scientific history. It is rather a theological philosophy of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church through nineteen centuries, complementing such works on Christian doctrinal history as those of A. V. G. Allen, G. Fisher, F. Kershner, A. C. McGiffert, Sr., S. J. Case, A. Harnack, G. Atkins and others.

The core of thought which unifies this book is found in this thesis: As at every natural birth there is an act of "substitution" and "coinherence," so there is such a process in the spiritual order. There is substitution of the male seed for that of the female, and a coinherence of the new life in the female. Natural man coinheres in the race and is thus partaker of racial guilt. By substitution the divine seed (Word) effects reconciliation of "the natural world with the world of the kingdom of heaven." Through baptism man coinheres in the Church and through personal confession of faith at confirmation he becomes reconciled fully to God.

The book shows throughout how this "substitution" and "coinherence" work

of the Holy Spirit has been promoted or hindered. One is fascinated by the style and point of view of this volume. That the Holy Spirit should be the subject of another volume is to be commended. The increased emphasis upon theology proper must not cause us to neglect the fact of divine immanence which is the content of the doctrine of the Spirit.

This is not an easy book for the average minister to read. It takes for granted a rather full grasp of details in the history of the Church. As remarked above, it is not a book of history, but an interpretation of Christian history. We still think that it might have had a title truer to its content.

However, this is a rewarding book, re-interpreting for us the organic nature of Christianity and the Christian life, and couching its survey of the spiritual history of Western Church and cultural history in delightful and arresting expression.

E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN.

The Seminary,
Princeton, N. J.

Stand by for China. By GORDON POTEAT.

Dangerous Opportunity: The Christian Mission in China Today. By EARLE H. BALLOU.

China Rediscovered Her West: a Symposium. Edited by YI-FANG WU and FRANK W. PRICE. New York: Friendship Press. Each, \$1.00 (in paper, 60 cents).

CHINA is in the spotlight again for the coming year, as the course of missionary study centers around this young-old nation. The Friendship Press has brought out significant helps to understanding in these three interesting and valuable books.

In the first Doctor Poteat, who began

his acquaintance with China twenty-five years ago, has given a series of vivid impressions of the language, the customs, and the common life of the Chinese. The modern resurgence of China under the influence of the West is presented through incidents and personalities. The book, while showing familiarity with other books, has not been written in dependence on others but from firsthand experience, not by generalizations but by typical examples. In some cases events and individuals of rather local interest are treated at length, but this only serves to heighten the impression of a personalized picture. While chief space is given to the Chinese people as human beings and to the Chinese nation in its renaissance, there are more than glimpses of the part Christian missions have played, especially as a pioneering educational and medical force. In a word, here is a thoroughly readable and informing delineation of the China of today from the Christian point of view.

Doctor Ballou's book, on the other hand, gives the place of prominence to the mission itself, analyzing its strength and its failures, and presenting a more connected and logical narrative. He too is concerned with the China of the present time, with only enough of history to supply a background. His work has related him more closely to the organizational life of the Christian Movement in China, and he speaks with authority of its branches and agencies and purposes. His *Dangerous Opportunity* is the translation of the Chinese word for "crisis," and he abundantly vindicates the use of such a phrase in connection with the present achievements and the future possibilities of Christianity in the great republic of the Far East.

The presentation of these two able and distinguished missionaries is supplemented in the third volume by the con-

tributions of nineteen writers, of whom nine are Chinese. The most famous, of course, is Madame Chiang Kai-shek, whose article on "The Spirit of New China" opens the symposium. President Chen of Nanking University and President Wu of Ginling College (the foremost woman Christian leader in China, next to Madame Chiang herself) write of the place of education and the place of women in the war for freedom. "Jimmie" Yen of Yale discusses his favorite theme of Mass Education. George Fitch of the Y.M.C.A. and Frank Price describe clearly what the "West" means to China and the world. We have here the story of one of the most remarkable migrations of all history, the trek into a secluded, backward, yet rich and fertile land of some thirty million people from the more progressive coastal provinces. One writer calls it the "coming home" of the Chinese people, home to the place where printing with movable types was invented long before the day of Gutenberg, home to the spot where Chinese civilization had its birth.

When one has come to know somewhat the Chinese character with Professor Poteat, to see the relation of the Christian religion to the modern development with Doctor Ballou, and then to migrate into "free China" with its exhilarating atmosphere—he has been initiated into the first degree of knowledge of a mysterious country.

HERBERT WELCH.

New York City.

Personal Experience and the Historic Faith. Fernley-Hartley Lecture. By A. VICTOR MURRAY. London: The Epworth Press. 6s. net.

PROFESSOR MURRAY, who is Professor of Education in University College,

Hull, England, is well known for his writings on education in Africa. In this volume, which he calls an Essay, he enters another field.

He is attempting here to show how profoundly Christian experience is affected by the fact that Christianity is an historical religion. "Christianity explains its nature in terms of historical events, the very things which might appear to be quite unspiritual, and thereby it creates a paradox for thought which is solved only in experience. . . . Christianity centers religion in something that has happened in the world of persons quite outside ourselves, and it makes that external standard something by which we can test our own feelings and experiences of it. . . . It is the outward that 'informs' the inward and tells us the nature of Him with whom we have communion" (p. 201).

The theme is large and important, and Professor Murray writes with vigor and clarity, but one closes the reading of the book with the feeling that the parts are greater than the whole. In other words, the theme is clear in different sections but the total impression is blurred rather than sharply focused.

The essay is divided into three parts which he names: The Natural Man and the Spiritual World, Experience and History, and The Christian Man. It would be simpler to say that Part One is philosophical, Part Two Biblical, and Part Three practical.

The third part is the most interesting and suggestive. The Christian experience based on the nature of self and on the Biblical-historical revelations and experiences is a fivefold discipline: Feeling, Knowing, Choosing, Doing, and Belonging. Professor Murray writes of these with rare and mature insight, wisdom, and devotion. He is himself a mystic to whom worship and not activity

is the core of the experience of the Christian. The book ends with a glorious chapter on "The Love of Jesus and the Vision of God."

The book is well worth reading for several reasons. First, because the Christian experience, as contrasted with religious experience, is described with great beauty and understanding. The author is gracious and generous toward all varieties of Christian expression, but is himself a lover of the sacraments and of prayer. "Beauty of form is something which is a manifestation in the present of values which are eternal" (p. 260). "Formalism represents something which has once been full of meaning and may be full of meaning again" (p. 259). The love of God revealed in Christ is the fundamentum of the Christian life. This in turn stirs our love. "We love because He first loved us." Here the author draws a distinction between a romantic love of God which is "often a very subtly disguised form of self-will," and a spiritual love of God where God is "the centre of the picture." He feels that many missionaries are of the former type, "particularly women missionaries." "Even a Christian Oriental mystic such as Sadhu Sundar Singh seems to me to be of the romantic type. The Japanese, Kagawa, is much more of the other type" (p. 276ff).

Second, the book is filled with most unusual quotations, many of them centuries old. Professor Murray's reading has length as well as breadth.

Third, several of his discussions are of great interest, such as that on "accidia." Accidia is "a peculiar disease of the soul due to lack of the right kind of feeling. . . . We lose all interest in what we are doing and are concerned only about the thing we are going to do next. We grow stale" (p. 193ff).

Fourth, many individual sentences are

epigrammatic and stick in the memory. We close this brief review with three or four picked almost at random: "Love can never be perfect unless we so love other people that the initiative can be with *them*" (p. 273); "To belong to any society is a way of experiencing the infinite" (p. 255); "The nature of every society is determined not so much by its purpose as by its leading personalities" (p. 256); "Experience creates doctrine by corroborating history" (p. 204).

OSCAR MACMILLAN BUCK.

Drew University,
Madison, N. J.

Ezekiel. An American Commentary on the Old Testament. By I. G. MATTHEWS. Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society (The Judson Press). \$2.50.

THERE is no standing still in matters of Biblical criticism and exposition. This is disconcerting to standpatters, but exhilarating to the alert. Hence new books which are abreast with the results of Biblical research are a necessity, and this applies to the book under review.

When the reviewer began teaching Biblical literature in college classes in 1895, the substantial unity and authenticity of the book of Ezekiel was generally held, and it was pointed to as an illustration that not all Biblical books, like the Hexateuch or Isaiah, for instance, were composite and had undergone editorial revision. But this is no longer so. After various attempts, going from one extreme to another, substantial agreement has been reached on the real character of the book, and this new commentary will serve as a guide to its understanding and evaluation.

The author adopts the view of the composite authorship of the book. What was formerly explained as the exceptional versatility of the prophet Ezekiel, particu-

larly his double-sidedness, prophet on the one hand and priest on the other, is now better accounted for by diversity of authorship and editorial activity. This explanation of the book is essential; and it is needed to supplement the best commentaries even only a decade old.

Accordingly, the book of Ezekiel contains three elements. First, the prophet's own contribution in chapters 1-39. This is in substance the most prominent and fundamental. In it the prophet is revealed as a poet, a discovery of modern Biblical research, possessing other considerable literary ability; delighting in vivid illustration and facile with allegory and parable; a Palestinian probably of Northern birth, resident in Jerusalem and of the priestly circle; with a distinct prophet's message, first of doom and later of reconstruction, in which he supplements and carries forward, even if not with the genius of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the essential ideas and ideals of his great predecessors. Secondly, chapters 40-48, the contribution of a priestly editor, probably a disciple of Ezekiel, a Babylonian captive, whose evident mission it was to develop and practically to enforce his master's reconstructive ideas along priestly lines. The new constitution which he furnishes has its center in the Temple rather than in the monarchy: it is that of a church rather than a state. Consequently, to the disciple rather than to the master belongs the title "the father of Judaism." This "Babylonian Editor," as the author calls him, organized material, much of which was at hand, to embody it into an ideal sketch of a new holy city, built on a lofty mountain, removed far from the unclean, the abode of Yahweh; and he also contributed the common idea of the priest-world that "sin was infectious." Third, there appear throughout the entire book additions and interpolations which are not the product of one man or

of one period, but which extend over a period of a century. They add to the priestly element and are eschatological; while the "Babylonian Editor" is mainly priestly, and Ezekiel himself is mainly interested in the solution of human problems and the realm of the spiritual.

The commentary is designed for the intelligent layman and the ministry, although the specialist cannot afford to neglect it. It is based upon independent study of the original texts, Hebrew and Greek, and the current literature of exegesis. A few critical notes, the only place where Hebrew words occur, are in the last eleven pages. The author is no novice in the field of the Old Testament, having contributed the commentaries on First and Second Samuel, Haggai and Malachi in this series; and his *Old Testament Life and Literature* is a book of value; besides he occupies the chair of Hebrew and the Old Testament at Crozer Theological Seminary. The work is a credit to American Old Testament scholarship, and it deserves to be used by all serious Bible students.

ISMAR J. PERITZ.

Wolcott, N. Y.

Tennant's Philosophical Theology.

By DELTON LEWIS SCUDDER.
Yale University Press. \$3.00.

In giving an able summary and critique of Tennant's philosophy of religion, Doctor Scudder has rendered a real service. While by the very nature of its subject the book is not, as Kierkegaard put it, something that can be read during an afternoon nap, nevertheless, for a philosophical presentation it is unusually readable. Since Tennant himself was primarily the philosopher, not the theologian, the problems here represented are, of course, philosophical in nature rather than springing from the very heart of Christian faith. There is real need, however, for the preparatory problems

of philosophy; and of the modern thinkers in this realm, Tennant was undoubtedly one of the greatest. Although he himself became limited by that naturalistic metaphysics which concealed itself behind the prestige of scientific method, he was also, nevertheless, one of its severest and most thorough critics.

Doctor Scudder's exposition of Tennant's most fundamental thoughts is clear, and as a whole, adequate.

Tennant taught that there were no short-cuts to the knowledge of God. He rejected religious experience, especially mysticism, as a proof for theism. As a matter of fact, all knowledge was to him probable only. What we experience directly he considered to be sensations, along with a minimum of simultaneous interpretation. The inner, abiding self, other persons, and God could be known only by means of interpreted experience, that is, by inference from the directly experienced data. Science, itself, in the sense of an interpreted system, is probable knowledge only, but is more closely related to the original data than religious knowledge, which requires more complex interpretation. Science, nevertheless, as a description of the world, is merely a purposefully limited abstraction from the fullness of experience. Religious knowledge, though harder to prove, is a more adequate explanation of all we know. Religious knowledge is based upon the analogy of the inferential knowledge of self and others. Only such hypotheses adequately explain the continuity of purpose revealed by selves. Similarly, the universe, by evincing purposeful order and growth in that purpose, points to God as the most probable hypothesis to explain all the facts.

Doctor Scudder, in launching a very thorough critique, argues that we know self, others, and God directly. In doing so he quotes freely from contemporary thinkers on the subject. His main argu-

ments are that one can never get from *sensa* to the knowledge of purpose or selves. If, on the other hand, selves are somehow directly experienced, imperfect interpretations of them can be explained in the light of partial understanding. Analogies, in any case, are convincing, not antecedent to but only consequent to the reality of the experience. Unless we know God directly, unless the religious experience at bottom is truly in contact with objective reality, there can be no analogies applicable from the human realm to God as the creator of the universe. As a whole, the first part of the critique is argued more cogently and convincingly than the second part. In denying the validity of analogies from human purpose to divine, Doctor Scudder has not sufficiently observed the constructive power of the mind. The mind has the power through an intuitive leap to arrive at hypotheses so directly related to objective reality that they can best explain all available facts.

The last part of the book contains a stimulating defense of theism. The position is that direct religious experience, the explanation of the universe in teleological terms, and the reality of the order of value must all go together to confirm the theistic position. Most of this is very good, although doubtless the *a priori* positions of Knudson, Hocking, and Griffiths, which Doctor Scudder has argued away, contain a more basic truth than is recognized by the author.

The reviewer regrets that Doctor Scudder became himself limited by Tennant's limitations. Tennant's main defects are due to an intellectualistic approach and a consequent world view which gives an inadequate account of God, of nature, and of man, particularly with respect to their organic interrelatedness. Given Tennant's total point of view, one can understand why he reached

his epistemological conclusions. A critique of Tennant from a more basic theological position is needed.

As far as the struggle between the immediate and the mediate knowledge of God is concerned, the issue is not so sharp as it seems. All reality, before it can become knowledge, must at some time be directly experienced. When it is so experienced, some interpretation arises at once. Any developed degree of knowledge, consequently, has a background of personal and social interpretation in terms of a larger experience. It thus contains a mediate aspect. But no matter whether this interpretation clarifies or distorts the reality, the reality itself is still directly experienced even through and with the interpretation. In this way the interpretation can be corrected and developed. As far as religious experience is concerned, we must insist both on the reality of immediate experience, and also on the intervening interpretation of it. Some prefer to use knowledge to mean the immediate awareness of the experience itself; others, to mean the developed interpretation. The danger of the second definition, even though it seems preferable from a critical point of view, is that it makes many people think that since our knowledge of God is mediated by a long history of religious interpretation, we now therefore have no real and direct experience of Him. In any case, the reality of the religious experience must be insisted upon. From the books that have come out during the last year or two, it is evident that there is a vital interest in this problem of the direct or indirect knowledge of God. Doctor Scudder's book provides a strong stimulus to adequate thinking along these lines.

NELS F. S. FERRÉ.

Abbot Professor of Christian Theology,
Andover Newton Theological School.

Bookish Brevities

The article by Dr. Harris Franklin Rall, "Have We a Doctrine of Salvation for Our Day?" is the substance of the address delivered by him at Garrett Biblical Institute commencement.

"The Christian Home in a Warlike World," the article by Dr. Daniel A. Poling, was given as an address at the Northern Baptist Convention held at Atlantic City.

One reads Tweedy of Yale—

"Man is the last, loveliest and most divine child of a life emerging out of creation's unthinkable beginning and journeying hopefully along the highways of illimitable time."

Then one thinks of Hitler.

Because of the critical international situation, Jennings Randolph, member of Congress from West Virginia, could not keep his engagements to speak at the Davis and Walkersville high school graduations. To take his place he secured his friend, Fred Taylor Wilson, author of the just-published book, *These Three Alone*. Mr. Wilson made a notable appeal to keep burning the lamp of faith in this hazardous hour in world history.

Dr. Jesse Halsey, who has contributed several articles to RELIGION IN LIFE, has recently been besought to accept the chair of practical theology in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Chicago. It seemed a highly suitable choice, but it resulted in one of the too rare expressions of a beautiful fealty, as churchmen and nonchurchmen in the Crescent City

united to demand that Doctor Halsey continue his ministry of Christian leadership, which he has agreed to do.

At the request of the directors of the Golden Gate International Exposition, Dr. Stanley Armstrong Hunter, a contributor to RELIGION IN LIFE, has compiled a beautiful book, *Temple of Religion and Tower of Peace* (printed by University of California Press, 132 pages, 40 illustrations, \$1.00). The book will be valued not only by Californians but by visitors to California, as a unique commemoration of an early chapter in Treasure Island history.

New England: Indian Summer, by Van Wyck Brooks, does for the period of 1865-1915 what *The Flowering of New England*, by the same author, did for the period of 1815-1865.

Essentially, the work is a study of another period of New England culture, though the author is careful to have us construe that term culture as the essence of the people's daily life. It is interesting to compare with this Matthew Arnold's definition of culture, which is, "To know the best that has been thought and said in this world."

"There are literally multitudes in the churches today who have a faith that is regulative of conduct but not a release of power."

"In every realm of life there is an unconscious antagonism to things we consciously affirm to be at work. We often forget to remember because we do not want to remember. Below the level of consciousness there is an inner dislike

of a person, an engagement, the fact, the duty involved, that tends to thrust the engagement completely out of mind."

These are quotations from Albert E. Day's thoughtful and brilliantly written book—*The Faith We Live*. (The Cokesbury Press.)

The seven volumes of the Madras report are worthy of being read by every student of the Christian movement. Yet there is a fear that the same fate of neglect may befall them as has been the fate of previous Conference reports. This is partly because too much valuable material is released at the same time. In this instance it is partly because the world is increasingly engrossed with the devastations of the war. Here and there is a genius like Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer who can devise plans for securing a reading by his constituency. Meanwhile it remains true that there are no fresher and better informed accounts of the Christian advance than are to be found in these Madras Reports.

Several percipient tributes to a teacher's life have recently appeared. One thinks of Phelps, Perry, and Mary Ellen Chase's *A Goodly Fellowship*. Miss Chase quotes from Santayana: "The analysis of novels turns mere events into ideas, which is the function of literature, the analysis of poems transforms words into emotion, the analysis of essays gives form and body to ideas and reflections." Again Miss Chase—"To use English fluently at all can never be taught." "All writing," as Emerson says, "comes by the grace of God." More limited approbation will be given to the sentiment—"As held the ancients, art is imitation and the life in art is quite as valuable to the would-be writer as life outside it. This," Miss Chase adds, "I

have found to be the chief of literary truths."

A. Edward Newton, one of the most famous book collectors in the world, raises many interesting questions about *Mein Kampf*. He thinks it has influenced the world beyond any other book and wonders whether copies of a first edition will come to be prized as a curio.

In the keeping of Professor Tinker of Yale, is the finest collection of German books in this country, but Mr. Newton is confident that he does not allow *Mein Kampf* to pollute his shelves. "If I had a copy," he writes, "regardless of its value, I would know what to do with it; but as a historic document I can think of no book in its class. It was addressed to the world; the world read it and smiled (when it should have shuddered) and passed on. I sometimes think that no one of my generation will ever smile again."

Tributes of praise are being showered on Hobart D. McKeehan in the publication of his book, *What Men Need Most*. It is being pointed out that he has remained in a comparatively small city where he is the center of admiring local and national groups. Few ministers have received such wholehearted approbation as has been given him, for instance, by Dr. Ralph W. Sockman:

"Doctor McKeehan, as pastor, addresses himself to human problems. As a physician to the spirit, he brings the cure of souls, blending the technique of the psychologist with the transforming power of the transcendent God. As a prophet, he sweeps the social horizon with telescopic vision, discussing, for instance, with rare insight the roads to true peace. As a priest, he points the way to divine communion through the sacraments of beauty and of silence."

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